



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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November 1, 2026

The Honorable Luke E. Torian  
Chair, House Appropriations Committee  
General Assembly Building; 12th Floor  
Richmond, VA 23218

The Honorable L. Louise Lucas  
Chair, Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee  
General Assembly Building, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Chair Torian and Lucas,

On behalf of the Board of Education and the Board of Nursing, I am pleased to submit the *High School Certified Nurse Aide Training Certification Program Interim Report*.

In response to House Bill (2026), enacted as [§ 22.1-204.4](#), this report reflects our continued commitment to supporting educators, administrators, workforce partners, and industry stakeholders across the Commonwealth in the activities of the Career and Technical Education High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program (Program). The Board of Education, in collaboration with the Board of Nursing, administers the Program and develop policies and procedures for the administration of the Program. The Program creates a pathway for qualified high school students to prepare for and obtain certification as a certified nurse aide (CNA) in the Commonwealth in accordance with the requirements of the Board of Nursing. By providing regulated work-based learning clinical experiences, industry aligned instruction, and an opportunity to earn a recognized healthcare credential while still enrolled in high school, the Program offers students a direct entry point into Virginia's healthcare workforce. This early access to certification supports postsecondary success, strengthens career readiness, and allows students to pursue meaningful employment opportunities immediately upon graduation, thereby enhancing both economic mobility and long-term workforce participation.

[HB413](#) requires the Board of Education to submit a report to the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Education by November 1 of each year on the activities of the Program for the preceding year. This report provides the data and analysis of the number of qualified high school students that enrolled in the Program of instruction the

previous school year, successfully completed such Program of instruction, and upon completion of the Program, passed the examination and successfully received certification as a CNA. The report will also identify the Board of Nursing's recommendations for the improvement and expansion of the Program, including any recommendations relating to funding needs.

If you have questions or require additional information, contact Dewayne McClary, Deputy Superintendent of Innovation, Student Pathways, and Technology at [dewayne.mcclary@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:dewayne.mcclary@doe.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenna Conway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Jenna Conway  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

JC/DM/aw

CC: The Honorable Dr. Jeffery Smith, Virginia Secretary of Education

# High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program Report

Code of Virginia § 22.1-204.4

Submitted to General Assembly of Virginia Chairs, Senate Committee on Education and Health and House Committee on Education



## PREFACE

Section [§ 22.1-204.4](#) of the *Code of Virginia* establishes the High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program (Program) and directs the Virginia Board of Education (BOE), in collaboration with the Virginia Board of Nursing, to administer and oversee its implementation. As required by statute, the Boards must annually report on Program participation, certification outcomes, and recommendations for improvement to the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Education.

This report represents the inaugural baseline analysis pursuant to that statutory authority and is intended to support the Commonwealth's ongoing efforts to expand workforce aligned opportunities for high school students. The Program, as defined in [§ 22.1-204.4](#), provides qualified high school students with access to Board-approved certified nurse aide training Programs designed to meet the Board of Nursing's instructional and certification requirements and to prepare students for employment as Certified Nurse Aides (CNAs) in Virginia.

The Boards acknowledge the contributions of the Department of Education (VDOE) and the Department of Health Professions (DHP) in developing policies, procedures, eligibility criteria, instructional requirements, and oversight systems necessary for the administration of the Program. Additional support is provided by approved educational centers across the Commonwealth, including public and private institutions, career and technical education (CTE) centers, and community colleges. These collective efforts ensure that the Program remains rigorous, equitable, and aligned with statewide workforce needs.

This report provides the statewide and regional data required under subdivision D 4 of [§ 22.1-204.4](#), including student enrollment, completion, certification outcomes, and to the extent feasible, information on CNA employment within one year of certification. It also offers preliminary recommendations for strengthening and expanding the Program in future years. Serving as the foundation for ongoing evaluation and refinement, this report supports the Commonwealth's commitment to building a responsive healthcare workforce pipeline and expanding high-quality career pathways for Virginia's students.

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## Executive Summary

This interim report, prepared pursuant to [§ 22.1-204.4](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, presents a statewide baseline assessment of the High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program (Program). The Program, administered jointly by the Virginia Department of Education Board of Education and the Virginia Department of Health Professions, establishes an approved pathway for qualified high school students to complete Board-regulated nurse aide training, meet all instructional and clinical requirements, and obtain certification as a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) in the Commonwealth. The report fulfills the statutory requirement to provide annual data on student enrollment, Program completion, certification outcomes, and where feasible, employment results for newly credentialed CNAs.

Data contained in this report was collected from the CTE Credential Collection, Master Schedule Collection, and the Student Record Collection, for school year 2025-26. The [Data Report - High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program SY 2025-26](#) identifies Virginia CTE Nurse Aide Programs with 3,784 students enrolled across 85 school divisions, demonstrating broad statewide access to regulated health science training. Enrollment patterns reflect substantial regional participation, with the Northern Virginia region leading the Commonwealth at 1,119 students, followed by Central Virginia, Western Virginia, Blue Ridge and Valley, Southwest Virginia, and Tidewater and the Eastern Shore. The credentialing data show 950 CNA exam attempts statewide and 836 successful certifications, yielding an overall pass rate of approximately 88 percent. Credential attainment is distributed across all Superintendent Regions, with the highest numbers occurring in Northern Virginia, Western Virginia, and the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula regions, and strong performance from both large Governor's Health Sciences Academies and rural CTE centers., and strong performance from both large Governor's Health Sciences Academies and rural CTE centers.

Pursuant to [§ 22.1-204.4](#), this report must also include, to the extent feasible, data on the employment of students who successfully obtained a CNA certification, including the number employed in the Commonwealth within one year of earning the credential. At present, such employment outcome data is not collected or maintained by the Virginia Department of Health Professions, the Board of Nursing, or the Virginia Department of Education. As a result, statewide employment tracking cannot be completed using existing agency data systems. Individual training programs may collect employment information at the local level, and the Boards recommend encouraging divisions and training providers to develop consistent processes for gathering and reporting these outcomes in future reporting cycles.

The Board of Nursing identified several statewide strategies to strengthen student participation and certification success, including improved communication and outreach to families, expanded middle-school awareness of health science pathways, and deeper partnerships with healthcare employers to enhance clinical placement access and sponsorship opportunities. A further review

of statewide Program distribution is recommended to identify underserved regions and expand approved CNA programs where demand and workforce needs are greatest.

Collectively, this initial baseline review demonstrates that Virginia has established a strong foundation for a high-quality, workforce-aligned CNA training pipeline through its CTE system. Continued refinement of statewide coordination, expansion of clinical capacity, targeted supports for students, and improved local employment data collection will strengthen the Program and ensure that high school students across the Commonwealth have equitable access to training that prepares them for immediate entry into the healthcare workforce.

## Background

Section [§ 22.1-204.4](#) of the *Code of Virginia* establishes the High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program, creating a statewide pathway for qualified high school students to enroll in Board-approved CNA training designed to meet all Virginia Board of Nursing requirements. The statute directs the Board of Education, working in collaboration with the Board of Nursing, to administer the Program; approve qualified training providers; develop policies governing instructor qualifications, student eligibility, and Program oversight; and submit an annual report by November 1 to the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Education detailing enrollment, completion, certification, and workforce-related outcomes. This framework aligns with the existing CTE Health and Medical Sciences Nurse Aide Program, which provides regulated classroom and clinical instruction, instructional hours, and preparation for the National Nurse Aide Assessment Program (NNAAP) examination. The NNAAP is the official competency examination required to become a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) in Virginia.

In accordance with [§ 54.1-3006.1](#), the Board of Education and the Board of Nursing must annually develop and revise an interagency agreement to ensure consistent coordination and Program oversight. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalizes this collaboration by clearly delineating the responsibilities of each agency. Under the MOU, the Virginia Department of Education is responsible for approving CTE practical nursing and nurse aide programs, maintaining updated core competencies aligned with Board of Nursing regulations, setting instructor qualification requirements, coordinating meetings and communications, sharing Program compliance information, and supporting joint monitoring visits. The Virginia Board of Nursing, in turn, directs correspondence to designated Program directors and coordinators, provides regulatory communication to school divisions, participates in joint oversight activities when possible, and shares information relevant to Program compliance and regulatory requirements. Together, these coordinated duties establish the governance structure necessary to support high-quality CNA training and ensure statewide consistency in the implementation of [§ 22.1-204.4](#).

## Statewide Summary

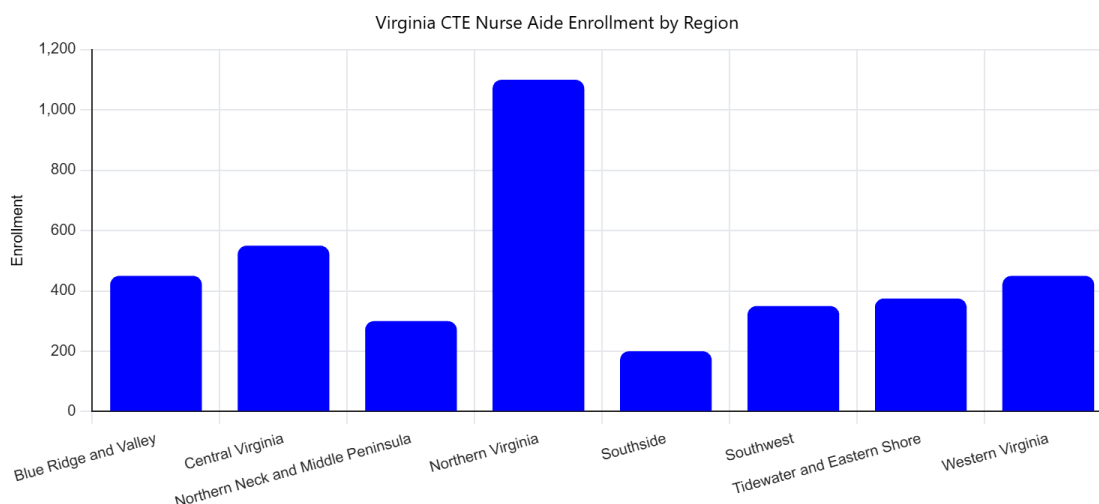
### *CTE Nurse Aide Program*

Virginia's CTE Nurse Aide [Program](#) is a comprehensive occupational training course that focuses on human body systems and common diseases. Students are prepared for advanced clinical care of patients in medical-surgical, rehabilitative, and community health settings. Students receive skills training in patient care, safety, and infection control, and hands-on clinical experiences in a healthcare setting that include patient-nurse aide communication and professionalism, measuring and recording vital signs, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and proper documentation. Work-based learning clinical experiences in a healthcare facility are a required

component of the course, and students must maintain the American Heart Association's Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Cardiovascular Care (ECC) training during this course. This course requires students to meet the Virginia Board of Nursing required clock hours to be eligible to take the NNAAP examination.

During the 2025-26 school year, the CTE Nurse Aide Program enrolled 3,784 high school students statewide, representing participation across 85 unique school divisions, with an average of approximately 45 students per division. The statewide credentialing data show 950 certification attempts, resulting in 836 CNA exams passed, indicating an overall exam success rate of roughly 88%.

Statewide enrollment for the CTE Nurse Aide Program shows regional participation, with notable concentrations in several Superintendent Regions of the Commonwealth. Northern Virginia leads the state with 1,119 students enrolled, reflecting the scale of its Governor's Health Sciences Academies and large student population. Enrollment is also substantial in Central Virginia (549 students) and Western Virginia (444 students). The Blue Ridge and Valley region enrolled 436 students, demonstrating consistent engagement across rural school divisions. Additional regions, including Tidewater and the Eastern Shore (367 students), Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula (287 students), Southwest Virginia (369 students), and Southside Virginia (213 students) contribute to statewide access by supporting a distributed network of Programs across diverse communities. Together, these enrollment patterns illustrate a concentrated pathway with regions contributing to overall growth while smaller and rural divisions continue expanding opportunities for students to engage in healthcare training programs.



Enrollment trends across the CTE Nurse Aide Program indicate the school divisions with the largest number of student participants. The school division with the largest number of students enrolled is Fairfax County Public Schools, where the Falls Church Governor's Health Sciences Academy enrolled 255 students, reflecting the scale of Northern Virginia's health sciences

pathways. Also, within Fairfax County, the Hardison Governor's Health Sciences Academy enrolled an additional 147 students. In Central Virginia, the Chesterfield Career and Technical Center at Courthouse reported 103 students, forming one of the state's largest single site nurse aide cohorts. Manassas City Public Schools contributed with 98 students at Osbourn High, demonstrating strong Program demand in a smaller urban division. Several other divisions also showed high engagement, including Mecklenburg County High with 76 students, the Chesapeake Career Center with 74 students, Rowanty Technical Center with 73 students, Henrico County's Advanced Career Education Center at Hermitage with 72 students, and Spotsylvania Career and Technical Center with 70 students. Additionally, the Charlottesville Area Technical Education Center (CATEC) enrolled 68 students, rounding out the top ten school divisions with the largest CTE Nurse Aide participation. Collectively, these divisions reflect the state's enrollment and highlight the benefits of investments in Governor's Health Sciences Academies and Technical Centers.

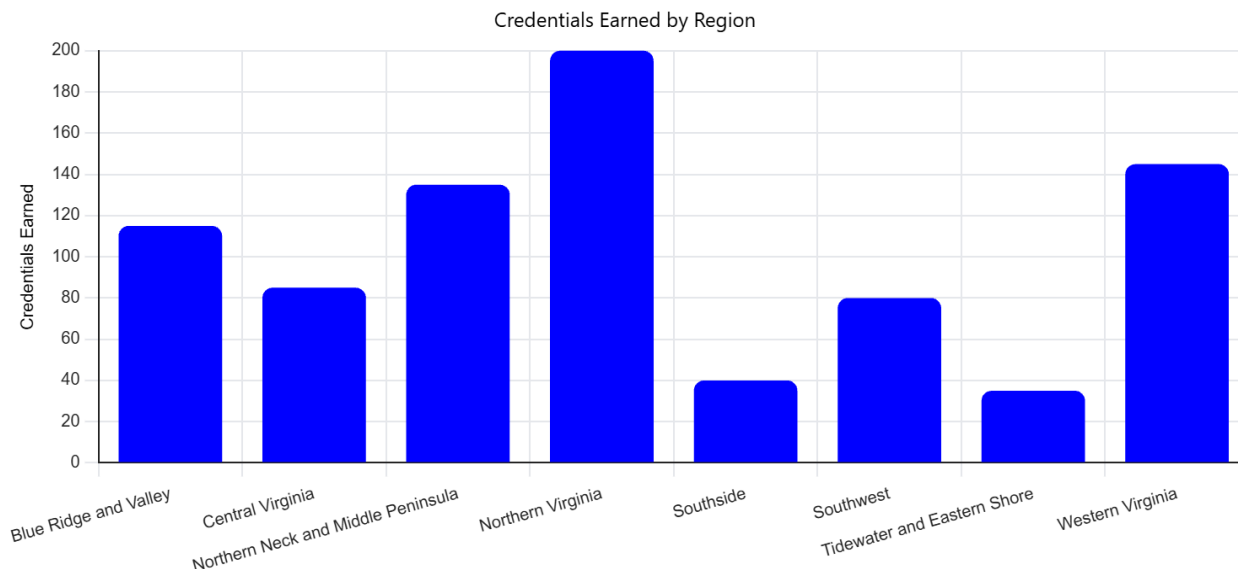
### *Credential Attainment*

The NNAAP is the official competency examination required to become a CNA in Virginia. Virginia's CTE Nurse Aide Programs collectively awarded 836 credentials statewide, demonstrating strong certification outcomes across diverse geographic regions. Northern Virginia led the Commonwealth with 202 credentials earned. Although 1,119 students were enrolled in a CTE Nurse Aide Program, the region shows a low number of CNA exam attempts (218 attempts) and earned credentials (202 passes) relative to its large enrollment base.

Western Virginia and the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula regions also reported high levels of credential attainment, earning 144 and 138 credentials respectively, in school divisions such as Frederick, Gloucester, and King George Counties. The Blue Ridge and Valley region contributed 116 credentials, in school divisions such as Albemarle County, Augusta County, Bedford County, and surrounding school divisions. Southwest Virginia achieved 82 credentials, with consistent contributions from Giles, Russell, Scott, Smyth, and Tazewell Counties. Central Virginia earned 83 credentials, with larger divisions such as Chesterfield and Henrico Counties providing multiyear coursework that supports regional demands. Southside Virginia generated 37 credentials, supported by divisions including Mecklenburg, Charlotte, and Caroline Counties, where Caroline High School achieved one of the highest pass rate efficiencies statewide with 33 students who passed the credential examination out of 34 students that attempted the examination. Tidewater and the Eastern Shore added 34 credentials, with Chesapeake, Isle of Wight, and Newport News leading the way.

The data reflects the volume of Programs available, illustrating that credential achievement is widely distributed in large and small school divisions and driven by both large Governor's Health Sciences Academies and rural Programs. Taken together, these results show that Virginia's CTE Nurse Aide Programs form a strong and geographically balanced pipeline into

the Commonwealth’s healthcare workforce, with notable concentrations of credential attainment in Northern Virginia, Western Virginia, and the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula, alongside steady contributions from rural and emerging Programs statewide.



### *Recommendations for Improvement*

The Virginia Department of Health Professions, Board of Nursing identified several statewide strategies to expand access to nurse aide training and support students in successfully earning the CNA examination. The Board recommends a review of Program advertising and outreach, ensuring that high school students and families understand the CNA career pathway, certification requirements, and the employment advantages associated with completing an approved nurse aide Program. Strengthened communication can help students and parents make informed course planning decisions early in their academic careers.

To support long-term Program participation, the Board of Nursing emphasizes early middle school outreach, particularly beginning in sixth grade. Early exposure to healthcare career pathways allows students to plan course sequences proactively, especially as graduation requirements and elective limitations begin shaping their schedules in later grades.

The Board also encourages deeper industry and employer partnerships across the Commonwealth. Collaboration with long-term care facilities, hospitals, and other healthcare providers can expand opportunities for structured pipeline Programs, work-based learning clinical experience placements, and sponsorship incentives, including support for exam fees or tuition. These partnerships help ensure that students gain meaningful clinical experiences while strengthening connections between K–12 programs and regional workforce needs.

The Board also recommends conducting a statewide Program distribution analysis to examine the geographic spread of existing nurse aide Programs. This review would identify underserved areas and high demand regions where additional Programs may be needed. Expanding Program availability in strategically selected divisions would help ensure more equitable access to CNA training and support the Commonwealth's ongoing efforts to grow a well-prepared healthcare workforce.

Lastly, to the extent feasible, data relating to the employment of students who successfully obtained certification as a CNA through the Program, including the number of students who successfully obtained employment as a CNA in the Commonwealth within a year of earning such certification, should be made available. As such employment data is not maintained by the Virginia Department of Health Professions, the Board of Nursing, or the Virginia Department of Education, Board of Education, the Boards shall recommend that individual training Programs collect and report these employment outcomes and stakeholder recommendations for the improvement and expansion of CTE Nurse Aide Programs, including identified funding needs.

## Conclusion

Virginia's High School Nurse Aide Training and Certification Programs play a role in strengthening the Commonwealth's healthcare workforce pipeline. Statewide enrollment is widely distributed, with participation across every region and school division demonstrating that students throughout the Commonwealth have meaningful opportunities to pursue nurse aide training as part of their secondary education experience. While credential attainment varies by division and region, the overall trends affirm that students are engaging deeply in the coursework and clinical preparation required for industry certification. The data reveals considerations which can be used to explain why many school divisions show high enrollment yet fewer examination attempts within a single reporting cycle. These patterns underscore the need for strengthened Program coordination, enhanced clinical capacity, and expanded student supports to ensure that more students reach certification eligibility.

Across the Commonwealth, school divisions must align Program delivery with Board of Nursing requirements, while the Board's recommendations point to important opportunities for statewide improvement. Expanded promotion and middle school outreach can help students plan earlier for health science career pathways, and stronger partnerships with healthcare employers can increase clinical access and provide incentives for students pursuing certification. Geographic analysis of Program distribution further highlights the benefit of expanding nurse aide Programs in underserved areas to ensure equitable access for all students.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that Virginia has established a solid foundation for preparing future certified nurse aides through its CTE system. By continuing to strengthen Program alignment, expand clinical partnerships, increase targeted supports, and refine statewide

coordination, the Commonwealth is well positioned to enhance student access, increase credential attainment, and meet the evolving workforce needs of Virginia's healthcare sector.

## Appendix A

### Summary of Results by Region

| Summary of Nurse Aide Program Enrollment and Credential Results |                                |                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Regions                                                         | Sum of Nurse Aide Total Enroll | Sum of Nurse Aide Credential Pass | Sum of Credential Attempts |
| ⊕ Blue Ridge and Valley                                         | 436                            | 116                               | 143                        |
| ⊕ Central Virginia                                              | 549                            | 83                                | 97                         |
| ⊕ Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula                            | 287                            | 138                               | 158                        |
| ⊕ Northern Virginia                                             | 1,119                          | 202                               | 218                        |
| ⊕ Southside                                                     | 213                            | 37                                | 47                         |
| ⊕ Southwest                                                     | 369                            | 82                                | 89                         |
| ⊕ Tidewater and Eastern Shore                                   | 367                            | 34                                | 45                         |
| ⊕ Western Virginia                                              | 444                            | 144                               | 153                        |
| Grand Total                                                     | 3,784                          | 836                               | 950                        |

### Full Data Report

[Data Report - High School Certified Nurse Aide Training and Certification Program SY 2025-26](#)