

Graduation Requirements

The requirements for a student to earn a diploma from an FCPS high school shall be those in effect when the student enters the ninth grade for the first time.

Rising 6th – 12th Grade Graduating Classes of 2023-29

STANDARD DIPLOMA 22 CREDITS		ADVANCED STUDIES DIPLOMA 26 CREDITS	
ENGLISH	4	ENGLISH	4
English grades 9-12 must be taken for credit in order to graduate. In addition, students must complete and pass the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments for Reading and Writing. Typically, these assessments occur in grade 11. Students have the option of general, honors, AP, and dual enrolled courses depending on grade level.		English grades 9-12 must be taken for credit in order to graduate. In addition, students must complete and pass the Virginia Standards of Learning assessments for Reading and Writing. Typically, these assessments occur in grade 11. Students have the option of general, honors, AP, and dual enrolled courses depending on grade level.	
MATH	3	MATH	4
Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least two different course selections from among Algebra I, geometry, algebra functions, and data analysis, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses approved by the board to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.		Courses completed satisfying this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of Algebra II. The board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Per the Standards of Quality, a computer science course credit earned by students may be considered a mathematics course credit.	
LABORATORY SCIENCE	3	LABORATORY SCIENCE	4
Courses shall include three selections from two different science disciplines: 1) Earth Science, 2) Biology, 3) Chemistry, and 4) Physics.		Courses shall include four selections from three different science disciplines: 1) Earth Science, 2) Biology, 3) Chemistry, and 4) Physics	

STANDARD DIPLOMA 22 CREDITS		ADVANCED STUDIES DIPLOMA 26 CREDITS	
HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE	4	HISTORY/SOCIAL SCIENCE	4
US and VA History (required) US and VA Government (required) Students may choose from two of the following courses: World Geography, World History I, World History II, AP World History		US and VA History (required) US and VA Government (required) Students may choose from two of the following courses: World Geography, World History I, World History II, AP World History	
HEALTH AND P.E.	2	HEALTH AND P.E.	2
All students must receive training in first aid, CPR, and AED. This training will be included in the FCPS Health and PE 10 curriculum.		All students must receive training in first aid, CPR, and AED. This training will be included in the FCPS Health and PE 10 curriculum.	
ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE	1	ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE	1
All students must complete one online course prior to graduation. Students completing the required FCPS Economics and Personal Finance course satisfy this requirement.		All students must complete one online course prior to graduation. Students completing the required FCPS Economics and Personal Finance course satisfy this requirement.	
		WORLD LANGUAGES	3 or 4
		Three years of one language or two years each of two languages.	
FINE ARTS/WORLD LANGUAGES/CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION	2	FINE ARTS/WORLD LANGUAGES/CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION	1
See course listing for options		See course listing for options; See additional graduation requirements.	
ELECTIVES	3	ELECTIVES	2 or 3
Students graduating with a Standard Diploma must include at least two sequential electives which may include courses from a variety of options.		Students graduating with an Advanced Diploma must include at least two sequential electives which may include courses from a variety of options.	

STANDARD DIPLOMA 22 CREDITS		ADVANCED STUDIES DIPLOMA 26 CREDITS	
Of the total credits shown above, students must earn a minimum of FIVE VERIFIED CREDITS from the following disciplines:		Of the total credits shown above, students must earn a minimum of FIVE VERIFIED CREDITS from the following disciplines:	
English 11 *Writing & Reading/Literature/Research	2	English 11 *Writing & Reading/Literature/Research	2
Mathematics	1	Mathematics	1
Science	1	Science	1
History/Social Science	1	History/Social Science	1

VERIFIED CREDIT means passing the course and the end-of-course SOL test.

Additional Graduation Requirements

Requirement	Description
Advanced Placement, Honors, or Career and Technical Education Credential	In accordance with the Standards of Quality, students shall (i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, or dual enrollment course; (ii) complete a high-quality work-based learning experience as established by board guidance on work-based learning; or (iii) earn a career and technical education credential approved by the board, except when a career and technical education credential in a particular subject area is not readily available or appropriate or does not adequately measure student competency, in which case the student shall receive satisfactory competency-based instruction in the subject area to satisfy the advanced studies diploma requirements. The career and technical education credential, when required, could include the successful completion of an industry certification, a state licensure examination, a national occupational competency assessment, or the Virginia workplace readiness assessment.
Virtual Course	Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a non-credit-bearing course or a required or elective credit-bearing course that is offered online.
Training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED)	Students shall be trained in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.
Demonstration of the Five Cs	Students shall acquire and demonstrate foundational skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship in accordance with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate approved by the board.

Credit Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Credit accommodations provide alternatives for students with disabilities in earning the standard and verified credits required to graduate with either an Advanced Studies or Standard Diploma. Credit accommodations for students with disabilities may include

- Alternative courses to meet the standard credit requirements
- Modifications to the requirements for locally awarded verified credits
- Additional tests approved by the Board of Education for earning verified credits
- Adjusted cut scores on tests for earning verified credits
- Allowance of work-based learning experiences through career and technical education (CTE) courses

Advanced Studies Diploma with Credit Accommodations Requirements

There is one credit accommodation available for the advanced studies diploma. This alternative for students to meet the world language requirement is available to students with an individualized education program (IEP) that specifies a credit accommodation for world languages.

§ 22.1-253.13:4. Permit a student who is pursuing an Advanced Studies Diploma and whose individualized education program specifies a credit accommodation for world language to substitute two standard units of credit in computer science for two standard units of credit in a world language. For any student that elects to substitute a credit in computer science for credit in world language, his or her school counselor must provide notice to the student and parent or guardian of possible impacts related to college entrance requirements.

Standard Diploma with Credit Accommodations Requirements

While credit accommodations provide alternate pathways and flexibility, students receiving accommodations must earn the 22 standard credits and five verified credits required to graduate with a Standard Diploma.

Eligibility Criteria: Credit accommodations for the Standard Diploma shall be determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or 504 plan committee, including the student where appropriate, at any point after the student's eighth-grade year. The school must secure the informed written consent of the parent/guardian and the student, as appropriate, to choose credit accommodations after a review of the student's academic history and full disclosure of the student's options.

The student must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive credit accommodations for the Standard Diploma:

- Student must have a current IEP or 504 plan with standards-based content goals.
- Student has a disability that precludes him or her from achieving and progressing commensurate with grade level expectations but is learning on grade level content.

- Student needs significant instructional support to access grade-level Standards of Learning (SOL) content and to show progress.
- Based on multiple objective measures of past performance, students might not be expected to achieve the required standard and verified units of credit within the standard time frame. For more information, please see the student's school counselor or case manager.

Applied Studies Diploma

The Applied Studies Diploma is a diploma option available to students identified as having a disability who complete the requirements of their individualized education programs (IEPs) and meet certain requirements prescribed by the Board of Education pursuant to regulations but do not meet the requirements for any named diploma. [Understanding the Applied Studies Diploma](#)

Certificate of Completion

Students who successfully earn the required number of standard credits but not the required number of “verified” credits are eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion. Students who receive the Certificate of Completion are not eligible for diploma seals. Students who successfully fulfill the requirements for earning a Certificate of Completion will be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

General Education Development Credential (GED)

Students who are at least 16 years of age may request to enroll in an Individualized Alternative Education Program (ISAEP) that leads to the opportunity to earn a high school equivalency (HSE) credential. Currently, the GED® test is the only approved HSE examination in Virginia. After required counseling by the student support specialist, the student, parent, and a school division representative at Dowell J. Howard Center, the student is administered the GED Ready® Practice Test along with an approved test of basic reading skills. If the required scores for entry are attained by the student, an ISAEP will be developed with the student, parent, ISAEP teacher, and administrator at Dowell J. Howard Center. The flexible-hour program housed at Dowell J. Howard Center will enable students to meet the requirements of their ISAEP and prepare them for the GED® test. Once students successfully fulfill their ISAEP and earn their GED®, compulsory attendance requirements are considered to have been fulfilled.

Graduation (Diploma) Seals of Achievement

Students who demonstrate academic excellence and outstanding achievement may be eligible for one or more of the following awards:

- **The Governor's Seal** shall be awarded to students who complete the requirements for an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "B" or better and successfully complete college-level coursework that shall earn the student at least nine transferable college credits in Advanced Placement (AP) or dual enrollment courses.
- **The Board of Education Seal** shall be awarded to students who complete the requirements for a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma with an average grade of "A."
- **The Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Seal** shall be awarded to students who earn a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and complete a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that they choose and maintain a "B" or better average in those courses or (i) pass an examination or an occupational competency assessment in a career and technical education concentration or specialization that confers certification or occupational competency credential from a recognized industry, trade, or professional association or (ii) acquire a professional license in that career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Board shall approve all professional licenses and examinations used to satisfy these requirements.
- **The Board of Education's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Seal** shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and satisfy all math and science requirements for the Advanced Studies diploma with a "B" average or better in all course work, successfully complete a 50 hour or more work-based learning opportunity in a STEM area, and satisfy all requirements for a Career and Technical Education concentration (a concentration is a coherent sequence of two or more state-approved courses) and pass one of the following: a Board of Education CTE STEM-H credential examination, or an examination approved by the Board that confers a college-level credit in a STEM field.
- **The Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Civics Education** shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma and (i) complete Virginia and United States History and Virginia and the United States government courses with a grade of "B" or higher; (ii) have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies; and (iii) complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. Activities that satisfy the requirements of clause (iii) of this subdivision include (a) volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick, or less fortunate; (b) participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or similar youth organizations; (c) participating in JROTC; (d) participating in

political campaigns or government internships, or Boys State, Girls State, or Model General Assembly; or (e) participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities that have a civics focus. Any student who enlists in the United States military prior to graduation shall be deemed to have met this community service requirement.

- **The Board of Education's Seal of Biliteracy** shall be awarded to students who demonstrate proficiency in English and at least one other language and meet additional criteria established by the board.
- **The Board of Education's Seal for Excellence in Science and the Environment** shall be awarded to students who earn either a Standard Diploma or Advanced Studies Diploma and (i) complete at least three different first-level board-approved laboratory science courses and at least one rigorous advanced-level or postsecondary-level laboratory science course, each with a grade of "B" or higher; (ii) complete laboratory or field-science research and present that research in a formal, juried setting; and (iii) complete at least 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities that involve the application of science such as environmental monitoring, protection, management, or restoration.