

Guidelines for Academic and Career Plans

as prescribed in

***Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting
Public Schools in Virginia***

8 VAC 20-131-140

***College and career preparation programs and
opportunities for postsecondary credit***

**Adopted by the
Virginia Board of Education
on
September 17, 2009**

Guidelines for Academic and Career Plans

Introduction

The Board of Education included in its 2009 revisions to the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, (8 VAC-20-131-5 et seq) provisions for each middle and high school student to have a personal learning plan that aligns academic and career goals with the student's course of study. On February 19, 2009, the Board adopted the revised Regulations, also known as the *Standards of Accreditation* [<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Accountability/soafulltxt.pdf>]. The section pertaining to Academic and Career Plans reads:

8 VAC 20-131-140: College and career preparation programs and opportunities for postsecondary credit.

Beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year, all schools shall begin development of a personal Academic and Career Plan for each seventh-grade student with completion by the fall of the student's eighth-grade year. Students who transfer from other than a Virginia public school into the eighth-grade shall have the Plan developed as soon as practicable following enrollment. Beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year, students who transfer into a Virginia public school after their eighth-grade year shall have an Academic and Career Plan developed upon enrollment. The components of the Plan shall include, but not be limited to, the student's program of study for high school graduation and a postsecondary career pathway based on the student's academic and career interests. The Academic and Career Plan shall be developed in accordance with guidelines established by the Board of Education and signed by the student, student's parent or guardian, and school official(s) designated by the principal. The Plan shall be included in the student's record and shall be reviewed and updated, if necessary, before the student enters the ninth and eleventh grades. The school shall have met its obligation for parental involvement if it makes a good faith effort to notify the parent or guardian of the responsibility for the development and approval of the Plan. Any personal academic and career plans prescribed by local school boards for students in grades 7-12 and in effect as of June 30, 2009, are approved to continue without further action by the Board.

Purpose of Academic and Career Plans

The Academic and Career Plan is designed to be a working document that maximizes student achievement by having the student accomplish goals in middle and high school that lead to postsecondary and career readiness. The Plan should be student-driven and maintained by school professionals working cooperatively to assist the student in reaching his or her goals in the most logical academic and career path.

The Academic and Career Plan should start with the end in mind. The student, parent or guardian, and school professional(s) will create a plan agreed upon by all parties to ensure everyone is focused on working toward the same goals and analyze and adjust the Plan in response to new information to meet the needs of the student.

Academic and Career Plan Timeline

Beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year, all schools shall begin development of a personal Academic and Career Plan for each seventh-grade student, with completion by the fall of the student's eighth-grade year.

Students who transfer from other than a Virginia public school into the eighth grade shall have the Plan developed as soon as practicable following enrollment. Beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year, students who transfer into a Virginia public school after their eighth-grade year shall have an Academic and Career Plan developed upon enrollment.

The Academic and Career Plan shall be signed by the student, student's parent or guardian, and school official(s) designated by the principal. The Plan will be included in the student's record and must be reviewed and updated, if necessary, before the student enters the ninth and eleventh grades. The schedule for revising the Plan may be determined by the school division. The school shall have met its obligation for parental involvement if it makes a good faith effort to notify the parent or guardian of the responsibility for the development and approval of the Plan.

Academic and Career Plan Template

The format of the Academic and Career Plan is flexible. Any personal academic and career plans prescribed by local school boards for students in grades 7-12 and in effect as of June 30, 2009, are approved to continue without further action by the Board.

A technical assistance document will be developed by the Virginia Department of Education to include a model Academic and Career Plan template that can be adapted for use by school officials working with students in academic and career preparation.

Academic and Career Plan Components

Required components of the Academic and Career Plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- The student's program of study for high school graduation that is aligned with a postsecondary career pathway and/or college entrance;
- A postsecondary career pathway based on the student's academic and career interests; and
- A signature from the student, student's parent or guardian, and school official(s) designated by the principal.