

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN –
GRADUATION COHORT OF FIFTY OR FEWER STUDENTS**

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (8 VAC 20-131-10 et. seq.) set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (§§ 22.1-253.13:1 et. seq.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to August 1 of the school year in which the plan is to be implemented.

8 VAC 20-131-280 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* states (in part):

Subject to the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-350 . . . schools with a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students as defined by the graduation rate formula adopted by the board may request that the board approve an alternative accreditation plan to meet the graduation and completion index benchmark.

The Board of Education, in its *Guidelines Governing the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, states:

In accordance with the provisions of [8 VAC 20-131-350](#) of the standards, local school boards may seek waivers of provisions of the standards to address the unique needs of special purpose schools. Such requests must include documentation of the need for the waiver. Waiver requests for special purpose schools and schools with a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer student will be considered based upon specified criteria. All applications must be submitted to the Board for consideration at least 90 days prior to August 1 of the school year. Requests for consideration must be accompanied by information that documents the need for approval of the request. The chair of the local school board and the division superintendent are requested to be in attendance at the Board of Education meeting when the proposal is considered.

We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

(on the August 9th agenda)

Date Approved by the Local School Board

7/30/2012

Submission Date



Signature – Chairman of the School Board



Signature – Division Superintendent

ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN TEMPLATE
GRADUATION COHORT OF FIFTY OR FEWER STUDENTS

School Name: Murray High School

Division Name: Albemarle County Public Schools

School Address: 1200 Forest Street Charlottesville, VA 22903

Contact Person: Ashby Kindler

Phone Number: 434-296-3090

Email: akindler@k12albemarle.org

Proposed Duration of Plan: Three years

Grade Levels Served: 9 - 12

Number of Students Enrolled by Grade:

9th grade 29

10th grade 27

11th grade 21

12th grade 23

Rationale:

If this school has a graduation cohort of 50 or fewer students and the school does not meet the 85% Graduation Completion Index (GCI) benchmark, the school would like to apply for an alternative accreditation plan as indicated in 8 VAC 20-131-280 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.

Due to the small cohort size, one student can make a significant difference in the index. For this reason, the GCI alone is not an appropriate measure for the school; additional criteria are needed to determine accreditation.

List the additional performance criteria on which you propose to base the school's accreditation and provide a proposed points award for meeting each criteria. The GCI cannot be changed. Additional criteria proposed must be objective, measurable, and directly address the school's graduation rate. (This will be different for each school. The Virginia Index of Performance may provide useful indicators that may be considered. This information can be found at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/va_index_performance_awards/index.shtml)

Description of Additional Criteria	Points Added to GCI for Meeting Criteria
GCI bonus for when 75% or more graduates enroll in post-secondary education, join the military, or obtain a full-time job.	+1
GCI bonus for increased percentage of students scoring advanced proficient on EOC reading, writing and/or math SOL assessments	+1
GCI bonus for earning at least 80 VIP Achievement Index Points in English	+1

GCI bonus for increased percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses	+1
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The criteria listed above will be applied to the GCI during one or more accreditation cycles over the next five years (through 2015-2016) only if: a) the school fails to meet the GCI benchmark for full accreditation, and b) the cohort size for the graduating class is 50 or fewer students according to the On-Time Graduation Rate cohort formula. If the criteria are applied, the maximum number of GCI points allowable according to cohort size will be:

- No bonus points assigned for 0-14 students. A written appeal to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction will be submitted.
- Maximum of five (5) points for cohorts of 15-20 students.
- Maximum of four (4) points for cohorts of 21-40 students.
- Maximum of three (3) points for cohorts of 41-50 students.

The division will submit a written appeal of the accreditation rating to the State Superintendent of Instruction for cohort sizes of less than 15 students or in cases where special circumstances warrant explanation and consideration in addition to the maximum point values outlined above.

List those individuals who were involved in the development of the proposed plan.

Dr. Billy Haun, Ms. Ashby Kindler, Ms. Betsy Agee