



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 23218

April 30, 2020

Dear Dr. James Lane,

I am writing to inform you that I have approved the following sixteen waivers and relief measures for regulatory and statutory requirements that cannot be reasonably met as a result of the declared state of emergency due to COVID-19. The proposed requests fall within authority provided to the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Governor Northam's [Executive Order Fifty-One](#) (EO51), issued on March 12, 2020, and budget language provided in [Chapter 1283](#) of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, and offer judicious and sensible solutions to the issues at hand.

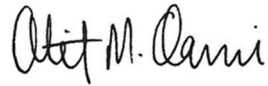
1. A waiver of any verified credit requirement, as set out in [8VAC20-131-50](#), that is a barrier to graduation for students who were enrolled in the Virginia public schools in spring 2020 and scheduled to graduate with the 2019-2020 cohort;
2. A waiver for those students who were enrolled in a course as of March 13, 2020, or have previously completed a course leading to a CTE credential necessary for a Standard Diploma but have not yet earned the credential;
3. A waiver on the cap of locally-awarded verified credits that can be earned by students affected by the 2019-2020 extended school closures. Such students, whether subject to graduation requirements in [8VAC20-131-50](#) or [8VAC20-131-51](#), can use the locally-awarded verified credit process for any course eligible for a verified credit in which the student was enrolled as of March 13, 2020. This applies to students seeking either a Standard or Advanced Diploma. This waiver is supplemented by VDOE's guidance on [Guidance on Graduation Requirements, Awarding of Credits, and Continuity of Learning](#) and the Board of Education's *Emergency Guidelines: Locally-Awarded Verified Credits*, adopted April 2, 2020;
4. Verified credits can be awarded in accordance with [8VAC20-131-110](#) in the Board of Education's *Regulations Establishing Standards for the Accreditation of Public Schools*. A student who was enrolled in a high school credit-bearing course eligible for a verified credit as of March 13, 2020, and who has received the standard unit of credit may be awarded a locally-awarded verified credit. For these classes only, the requirement to attempt the associated SOL end-of-course test twice and score within the 375-399 scaled score range in order to earn the locally awarded verified credits will be waived.

5. Students graduating with the 2019-2020 cohort, including terms in spring and summer 2020, shall be relieved of the requirement to complete training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillator, including hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (§ [22.1-253.13:4.D.7](#));
6. Students graduating with the 2019-2020 cohort, including terms in spring and summer 2020, shall be relieved of the requirement to complete a virtual course (§ [22.1-253.13:4.D.9](#));
7. Any individual seeking an initial license or renewal of licensure and who has completed all other components of training in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of automated external defibrillator shall be relieved of the requirement to have hands-on practice of the skills necessary to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation for the purpose of their licensure application until January 1, 2021 (§ [22.1-298.1.D](#));
8. Upon request, the Board of Education shall issue a One-Year License, effective July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, to individuals who have deficiencies for full licensure, including licensure assessments, but have not completed such licensure requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. VDOE will follow up in subsequent communication on the process for obtaining such a license and with details about allowable deficiencies. This license is intended to be nonrenewable and shall not be extended unless the declared state of emergency due to COVID-19 continues well into 2021. An application fee shall not be required for the One-Year License; however, the individual must pay applicable fees for any subsequent license;
9. The Superintendent of Public Instruction will identify a new label for accreditation (“accreditation waived”) and thus waive accreditation for each public school for the 2020-2021 school year based on data from 2019-2020;
10. Local school boards shall be relieved of the requirements to administer Standards of Learning end-of-course and end-of-grade assessments and the alternative assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities for the 2019-2020 school year. No local school board shall be required to certify it has administered an alternative assessment in 2019-2020 (§ [22.1-253.13:3.C](#));
11. Divisions shall be relieved from the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program spring testing requirements for the 2019-2020 school year ([Item 128.H.a-d](#) of the 2019 Appropriation Act);
12. Divisions participating in Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening assessments, as well as divisions with waivers, shall be relieved from the spring assessment requirement for the 2019-2020 school year ([Item 128.C.14](#) of the 2019 Appropriation Act);

13. For the 2020-2021 school year only, good cause waivers, pursuant to § [22.1-79.1](#), shall include any division seeking additional instructional days prior to the allowable school start date for students for lost teaching time in the 2019-2020 school year due to extended closures required by COVID-19;
14. Parents electing to provide home instruction during the 2019-2020 school year shall be relieved of the requirement to provide evidence of student progress to the local school division superintendent (§ [22.1-254.1](#));
15. The deadline for submitting Virginia Preschool Initiative applications remains set for May 15, but those divisions in need of flexibility can email earlychildhood@doe.virginia.gov ([Item 145.14.a-b](#) of the 2020 Appropriation Act);
16. Any school division or consortium of divisions applying for the School Program Innovation Grant for the 2020-2021 school year may have until July 2, 2020 to submit their grant application to the Department of Education ([Item 144.T](#) of the 2020 Appropriation Act).

These waivers and relief measures are effective with the issue of this letter.

Respectfully,



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Virginia Secretary of Education