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INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Generally

The Buchanan County school division is committed to excellence in education, equality of educational opportunity, and the recognition of each student's individuality. Inasmuch as students differ in their rate of physical, mental, emotional and social growth and vary in their needs and abilities, learning opportunities shall be provided that are consistent with personal development and potential. Programs shall emphasize diagnostic and prescriptive instruction, allowing an individual approach to each student's learning style and educational needs.

The educational program shall introduce each student to a variety of interests and areas that offer exposure to the range of opportunities available in later years. These experiences produce the basis for further education and future employment. As students demonstrate increased maturity, they may assume more responsibility for the decisions regarding their education.

The school environment should be responsive and conducive to learning. The physical environment facilitates and enhances the learning experiences available to each student. A responsive environment includes competent, dedicated teachers using a variety of techniques and a classroom atmosphere where students can function and develop according to their abilities. Safety, physical comfort, and appearance also are vital environmental components.

B. Standards of Quality and Objectives

The School Board accepts the overall goals of public education as expressed by the Standards of Quality legislated by the Virginia General Assembly and implemented by State Board of Education regulations. Education seeks to aid each student, consistent with his/her abilities, to:

1. Develop competence in the basic learning skills;
2. Develop the intellectual skills of rational thought and creativity;
3. Acquire knowledge and process skills of science and technology;
4. Progress on the basis of achievement;
5. Qualify for further education and/or employment;
6. Develop personal standards of ethical behavior and moral choice;
7. Participate in society as a responsible family member and citizen;
8. Develop a positive and realistic concept of self and others;
9. Practice sound habits of personal health and physical fitness;

10. Enhance the quality of the environment;
11. Develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes regarding the arts;
12. Acquire a basic understanding and appreciation of democracy and the free enterprise system;
13. Raise student and school achievement in the core Standards of Learning.
14. Develop proficiency in the use of computers and related technology.

C. Standards of Quality - Programs and Services

The School Board commits itself to providing programs and services as stated in the Standards of Quality to an extent proportionate to the availability of state and local funding.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:1 et seq.
8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

NOTIFICATION OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

I. Annual Notice

At the beginning of each school year, each school within the Buchanan County School Division will provide to its students' parents or guardians information on the availability of and source for receiving:

- the learning objectives developed in accordance with the Standards of Accreditation to be achieved at their child's grade level, or, in high school, a copy of the syllabus for each of their child's courses;
- the Standards of Learning (SOLs) applicable to the child's grade or course requirements and the approximate date and potential impact of the child's next SOL testing;
- an annual notice to students in all grade levels of all requirements for Board of Education-approved diplomas; and
- the board's policies on promotion, retention, and remediation.

The Superintendent will certify to the Department of Education that the notice required by this policy has been given.

II. Notice of Credits Needed for Graduation and of the Right to a Free Public Education

- A. The school board will notify the parent of rising eleventh and twelfth grade students of
 - (i) the number and subject area requirements of standard and verified units of credit required for graduation pursuant to the Standards of Accreditation and
 - (ii) the remaining number and subject area requirements of such units of credit the individual student requires for graduation.
- B. The School Board will notify the parent of students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and who fail to meet the requirements for a standard or advanced studies diploma of the student's right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive, pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-213 et seq.
- C. The School Board will notify the parent of students who fail to graduate or who fail to achieve the number of verified units of credit required for graduation as provided in the standards of accreditation and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1st of the school year of the right to a free public education. If the student who does not graduate or achieve such verified units of credit is a student for whom English is a second language, the School Board will notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance with Va. Code § 22.1-5.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:4.

8 VAC 20-131-270.

Cross Refs.: IGBC Parental Involvement
IKF Standards of Learning Tests and Graduation Requirements

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The School Board seeks to educate young people in the democratic tradition, to foster a recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, and to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Freedom of individual conscience, association, and expression will be encouraged and fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate examples the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Students may express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. Such home and classroom work shall be evaluated by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-203.3.

Cross Ref.: IKB Homework
INDC Religion in the Schools

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL DAY

School Year

The length of the school year will be at least 180 teaching days or 990 teaching hours. Days on which a school or schools or all the schools in the division are closed due to severe weather or other emergencies will be made up as provided below if necessary to meet these requirements.

Make Up Days

If severe weather conditions or other emergency situations result in the closing of a school or schools or all the schools in a school division for

- five or fewer days, all missed days will be made up by adding teaching days to the school calendar or extending the length of the school day;
- six days or more, the first five days plus one day for each two days missed in excess of the first five will be made up by adding teaching days to the school calendar or extending the length of the school day.

If severe weather conditions or other emergency situations result in the closing of any school in a school division and such school has been unable to meet the 180 teaching day requirement, the school division may make up the missed teaching days by providing its students with instructional hours equivalent to such missed teaching days to meet the minimum 990 teaching hour requirement.

The Board of Education may waive the requirement that school divisions provide additional teaching days or teaching hours to compensate for school closings resulting from a declared state of emergency under certain circumstances. If the school board desires a waiver, it will submit a request to the Board of Education. The request will include evidence of efforts that have been made by the school division to reschedule as many days as possible and certification by the division superintendent and chairman of the school board that every reasonable effort for making up lost teaching days or teaching hours was exhausted before requesting a waiver. If the waiver is denied, the school division will make up the missed instructional time.

School Calendar

The first day of school will be after Labor Day unless this requirement has been waived by the Board of Education pursuant to the Code of Virginia, § 22.1-79.1

The school board will establish the division's calendar and teaching contracts in accordance with applicable regulations of the Board of Education to include contingencies for making up teaching days and teaching hours missed for emergency situations.

An advisory committee composed of teachers, parents, and school administration may be utilized to recommend a proposed calendar to the superintendent. The recommendation of this committee shall be considered advisory.

School Day

The standard school day for students in grades 1 through 12 will average at least 5-1/2 hours, excluding breaks for meals. The standard school day for kindergarten is a minimum of three hours.

All students in grades 1 through 12 will maintain a full day schedule of classes (5-1/2 hours), unless a waiver is granted in accordance with policies defined by the school board.

Each elementary school shall provide students with a daily recess during the regular school year, as determined appropriate by the school.

The secondary school class schedule shall contain a minimum of 140 clock hours for each unit of credit. When credit is awarded in less than whole units, the increment awarded must be no greater than the fractional part of the 140 hours of instruction provided.

The time for opening and closing schools will be established by the school board upon recommendation of the division superintendent, provided that the daily program for students in grades 1 through 12 will average at least 5 1/2 hours, not including meal intermissions. If the required program length is maintained, the school board may approve occasional shortened days for staff development, conferences, planning, and other activities designed to improve the instructional program, provided that no more than one day in each five-day week may be shortened to no less than four hours. The daily program for kindergarten will be at least three hours, not including meal intermissions.

When exceptions in the length of the daily program are necessary for special education, alternative education, double shifts, and scheduling or other unusual situations, the board will request approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the exceptions by August 1 preceding the school year for which they are requested.

The length of the work day for employees will be determined by the school board. It will be of sufficient length to allow for the daily program for students and additional time as may be necessary for such activities as planning, preparation, meetings, workshops, conferences, meal intermissions, or other contractual obligations.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended §§ 22.1-79.1, 22.1-98.

8 VAC 20-131-80

8 VAC 20-131-150

8 VAC 20-490-30.

Cross Ref.: GAA Staff Time Schedules

MOMENT OF SILENCE

The Buchanan County School Board recognizes that a moment of silence before each school day prepares students and staff for their respective work or school days. Therefore, each teacher shall observe a moment of silence at the beginning of the first class of each school day.

The teacher responsible for each class shall make sure that each student: (1) remains seated and silent and (2) does not disrupt or distract other students during the moment of silence. The moment may be used for any lawful silent activity, including personal reflection, prayer and meditation. However, the teacher responsible for each class shall not influence, in any way, students to pray or meditate or not to pray or meditate during the moment of silence. Students and employees are prohibited from praying aloud during the moment of silence.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, § 22.1-203; Virginia State Board of Education “Guidelines Concerning Religious Activity in the Public Schools;” *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38 (1985).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance, as established in 4 U.S.C. § 4, shall be recited daily in each classroom of the Buchanan County School Division.

During the recitation of the Pledge, students shall stand and recite the Pledge while facing the flag with their right hands over their hearts or in an appropriate salute if in uniform.

No student shall be compelled to recite the Pledge if he, his parent or legal guardian objects on religious, philosophical, or other grounds to his participating in this exercise. Students who are exempt from reciting the Pledge shall quietly stand or sit at their desks while others recite the Pledge and shall make no display that disrupts or distracts those who are reciting the Pledge.

Appropriate accommodations shall be made for students who are unable to comply with the procedures described herein due to disability.

Adopted: August 13, 2001

Legal Refs: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-202.

4 U.S.C. § 4.

36 U.S.C. § 175 et seq.

NATIONAL MOTTO

The statement “‘In God We Trust,’ the National Motto, enacted by Congress in 1956” shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each school for all students to read.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Ref: Acts 2002, c. 891.

BILL OF RIGHTS OF THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States shall be posted in a conspicuous place in each school for all students to read.

Adopted: October 20, 2003

Legal Ref: Acts 2003, c. 902.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION

The curriculum shall meet or exceed the requirements of the Code of Virginia and regulations of the State Board of Education and shall be aligned to the Standards of Learning. The curriculum is a means to achieve pupil learning.

Curriculum development is a goal-based process. The process encompasses, (1) identification of division goals, (2) identification of program goals and student learning results, (3) curriculum evaluation, and (4) curriculum improvement.

The purposes of the process are to:

1. Respond to the division needs assessment.
2. Define desired student learning results in each curriculum area.
3. Evaluate the curriculum and its implementation.
4. Provide for continuous curriculum improvement.
5. Provide for curriculum coordination within, between and across grade levels.
6. Determine how well individual students accomplish program goals and achieve expected learning results.
7. Provide a process for staff and community input in developing and implementing curriculum.

The School Board expects the administration and faculty to evaluate the educational program and regularly to report findings and recommendations to the board. These recommendations shall include modifications of desired learning results, division or program goals, new courses or course content, resources, materials, and learning experiences.

Proposed curriculum and program changes shall be submitted, in writing, to the assistant superintendent for review with recommendations to the superintendent.

The superintendent shall present new courses and new educational programs to the Board for action, as well as programs and courses that have extensive revisions or additions.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:1.B.

8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

Cross Ref.: AF Comprehensive Plan

PILOT, RESEARCH OR EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS

Right to Inspect Instructional Materials

In addition to any other rights with respect to the inspection of instructional materials, the parent or guardian of a child enrolled or engaged in any research or experimentation program or project which is funded by the United States Department of Education shall be entitled to inspect all instructional materials which will be used in conjunction with such program or project.

Research and Informed Consent

As used herein, the term "research or experimentation program or project" means any systematic investigation which departs from the application of established and accepted methods which are appropriate to meet the students' needs and may result in physical or psychological injury to the participants. The designation of any program or project as a research or experimentation program or project shall be made by the superintendent of schools.

Informed Consent

No research shall be conducted or authorized unless the student's parents or legally authorized representative or emancipated student signs a student consent form and has it witnessed. The form shall comply with the Va. Code § 32.1-162.18.

Any research involving students shall be approved and conducted under the review of a human research committee established by the school division.

If the subjects cannot be identified and the research falls within the exemptions of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, the research is exempted from these requirements.

Any complaints arising under this policy shall be submitted under Policies KL or KLB as appropriate.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Ref.: 20 U.S.C. § 1232h(a)

45 C.F.R. 46.101 et seq.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-16.1, 22.1-78, 32.1-162, 16-162.20.

8 VAC 20-565-10 et seq.

Cross Ref.: JHDA Human Research

KFB Administration of Surveys and Questionnaires

CURRICULUM GUIDES AND COURSE OUTLINES

The staff, under the direction of the superintendent, shall develop curriculum guides and courses of study and shall provide for continuing review and revision of these documents. The superintendent shall annually budget funds to support these ongoing projects, and is authorized to create advisory committees composed of staff, if necessary, to carry out this policy.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, as amended, § 22.1-78.

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Because education is a lifelong process, the educational program shall provide both formal studies to meet the general academic needs of all students, and opportunities for individual students to develop specific talents and interests in career and technical and other specialized fields and grow toward independent learning.

The various instructional programs shall be developed with the view toward maintaining balanced, integrated, and sequentially articulated curricula which shall serve the educational needs of all school-aged children in the division.

The Buchanan County School Board subscribes to the philosophy that well-developed reading and other basic skills, including the ability to spell, speak, and write intelligently are essential in society. It shall adopt specific requirements to ensure that high school graduates are sufficiently competent in these essential skills.

At all levels, provisions shall be made for a wide range of individual differences in student abilities and learning rates through uses of a variety of materials, adjustments in programs, and courses adapted to special needs of students.

The curriculum shall meet or exceed those requirements established by the Code of Virginia, the State Department of Education, and the State Board of Education. The curriculum will be aligned to the Standards of Learning.

Adopted: June 23, 2005

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-253.13:1 et seq.

8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Buchanan County School Board will provide career and technical educational programs incorporated into the kindergarten through twelfth grade curricula that include

- knowledge of careers and all types of employment opportunities including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, entrepreneurship and small business ownership, the military, and the teaching profession, and emphasize the advantages of completing school with marketable skills;
- career exploration opportunities in the middle school grades; and
- competency-based career and technical education programs which integrate academic outcomes, career guidance and job-seeking skills for all secondary students based on labor market needs and student interest. Career guidance shall include counseling about available employment opportunities and placement services for students exiting school.

The School Board will develop and implement a plan to ensure compliance with this Policy. This plan shall be developed with the input of area business and industry representatives and local community colleges and shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with the timelines established by federal law.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:1.

8 VAC 20-120-40.

Cross Ref.: IJ Guidance and Counseling Program

HEALTH EDUCATION/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Each school shall organize and maintain a physical and health education program in accordance with State Board of Education regulations and State Board of Health guidelines.

The Buchanan County school division's goal is that a program of physical fitness will be available to all students for at least 150 minutes per week on average during the regular school year. Such program may include any combination of physical education classes, extracurricular activities, and other programs and activities.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-207, 22.1-212.1:1, 22.1-253.13:1.D.13.

8 VAC 20-320-10.

Cross Refs.: IGAG Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
JHCA Physical Examinations of Students
JHCF Student Wellness
JO Student Records

TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

Each student shall receive instruction in drug education in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the State Board of Education and shall receive first aid instruction for drug abuse at the appropriate levels.

Each student shall receive instruction concerning the public safety hazards and dangers of alcohol abuse, underage drinking, and drunk driving.

Adopted: August 13, 2001

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-206.

8 VAC 20-310-10.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (FLE)

Generally

The Buchanan County School Board approves the inclusion of family life education (FLE) in the curriculum. Instruction shall be organized and maintained under the FLE standards of learning objectives developed by the State Department of Education.

Community Involvement Team

Under procedures approved by the School Board, a community involvement team shall be established. The team may include but not be limited to school administrators, teachers, parents, clergy, medical professionals, mental health professionals, and others in the community.

Instructional Materials

All instructional materials used in family life education (FLE) must be approved by the superintendent or his/her designee. No materials relating to FLE may be available for circulation to students through the school libraries or resource and media centers unless the School Board has approved these materials.

Staff Training

Teachers in the Family Life Education program will participate in the training program sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education.

Grade Level Leaders

The superintendent, or a designee, shall appoint a FLE leader for each grade level. The FLE leader will assist in training teachers, work with the community involvement team, and assist in the implementation and evaluation of the program.

Separate Sessions

Portions of classes in the FLE program which deal exclusively with human sexuality may be conducted in separate sessions for boys and girls.

"Opt-out" Procedures

The superintendent shall develop "opt-out" procedures for parents or guardians who do not want their children included in all or part of the FLE program.

Annual Review

The FLE curriculum shall be reviewed annually. Such review shall allow for community input.

Right of Parental Review

A parent or guardian shall have the right to review the family life curricula, including all supplemental materials used in the program.

The school board shall develop and distribute to the parents or guardians of students participating in the family life education program a summary designed to assist them in understanding the program implemented in its school division and to encourage parental guidance and involvement in the instruction of the students. Such information shall reflect the curricula of the program as taught in the classroom. The following statement will be included on the summary: "Parents and guardians have the right to review the family life education program offered by their school division, including written and audio-visual educational materials used in the program. Parents and guardians also have the right to excuse their child from all or part of family life education instruction."

Adopted: July 28, 2011

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-207.1, 22.1-207.2.

8 VAC 20-131-170.

Virginia Department of Education, Family Life Education: Board of Education Guidelines and Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools (revised 2009) (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/family_life/familylife_guidelines_standards.pdf)

Cross Refs.: IIA Instructional Materials
INB Teaching About Controversial Issues
KLB Public Complaints About Learning Resources

CHARACTER EDUCATION

The Buchanan County School Board shall establish, within its existing programs or as a separate program, a character education program in its schools. The character education program may occur during the regular school year, during the summer in a youth development academy offered by the school division, or both. The purpose of the program is to foster civic virtues and personal character traits so as to improve the learning environment, promote student achievement, reduce disciplinary problems, and develop civic-minded students of high character. The program shall be cooperatively developed with students, parents, and the community. Specific character traits emphasized may include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

Character education shall be interwoven into the school procedures and environment so as to instruct primarily by example, illustration, and participation, in such a way as to complement the Standards of Learning. Classroom instruction may also be used to supplement the program. The program shall also address the inappropriateness of bullying, as defined in the Student Conduct Policy Guidelines adopted by the Board of Education pursuant to § 22.1-279.6.

Each local character education program shall

- specify those character traits to be taught, selecting from those which are common to diverse social, cultural, and religious groups;
- be implemented at the elementary and secondary levels;
- provide for relevant professional development and adequate resources; and
- include a method for program evaluation.

Character education is intended to educate students regarding those core civic values and virtues which are efficacious to civilized society and are common to the diverse social, cultural, and religious groups of the Commonwealth. It shall not include indoctrination in any particular religious or political belief. Consistent with this purpose, Virginia's civic values, which are the principles articulated in the Bill of Rights (Article I) of the Constitution of Virginia and the ideals reflected in the seal of the Commonwealth, as described in Va. Code § 1-500, may be taught as representative of such civic values.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Refs.: U.S. Const. amend. 1.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-208.01.

Superintendent's Memorandum No. 45 (Mar. 10, 2000).

Cross Refs.: IKF Standards of Learning Tests and Graduation Requirements
 INB Teaching About Controversial Issues
 INDC Religion in the Schools

DRIVER EDUCATION

A program of driver education in the safe operation of motor vehicles and knowledge of rules, regulations and laws shall be offered in the high schools. The program shall consist of classroom training and "behind the wheel training." The School Board shall establish fees, that do not exceed the limit established by the State Department of Education, for the "behind the wheel" portion of the program. The School Board may also request approval from the Board of Education to assess a surcharge to recover program costs that exceed state funding. The School Board may waive the fee or surcharge in whole or in part for those students it determines cannot pay the fee or surcharge. The program shall include instruction concerning alcohol and drug abuse, aggressive driving, motorcycle awareness, distracted driving, organ and tissue donor awareness, and fuel-efficient driving practices.

No student shall be permitted to operate a motor vehicle without a learner's permit or a license. Necessary certification of students' academic standing and compliance with compulsory attendance laws shall be provided by the administration to the Department of Motor Vehicles upon request, in accordance with state law.

At the beginning of each school year and thereafter as necessary, the Superintendent shall report to the Department of Motor Vehicles the name and driver's license number of all persons providing instruction in driver education for the school division.

Adopted: July 28, 2011

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-204; 22.1-205; 46.2-335, 46.2-325, 46.3-334, 46.2-340.

8 VAC 20-340-10.

Cross Ref.: JED Student Absences/Excuses/Dismissals
JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct
JN Student Fees, Fines, and Charge

ALTERNATIVES TO ANIMAL DISSECTION

The Buchanan County School Board provides one or more alternatives to animal dissection for students enrolled in biological sciences classes that incorporate dissection exercises. These alternatives may include computer programs, Internet simulations, plastic models, videotapes, digital videodiscs, and charts. The alternative techniques require a comparable amount of time and effort as do the dissection exercises and provide comparable depth and scope of learning. The alternative techniques provide the student, through means other than dissection, with knowledge similar to that expected to be gained by other students in the course who perform, participate in, or observe the dissection. Testing procedures that do not require the use of dissected specimens are provided for those students who choose an alternative technique.

A student's objection to participating in an animal dissection should be substantiated by a signed note from his or her parent or guardian.

Adopted: June 23, 2005

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-200.01.

Guidelines for Alternatives to Dissection (Attachment to Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Memo #161 (Aug. 6, 2004)).

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A child find program shall be established and designed to identify, locate and evaluate those children from birth to 21 inclusive who may have disabilities and may need special education and related services. The Board shall ensure that a free, appropriate public education will be available for all children and youth with disabilities, ages 2 through 21, who are residents of Buchanan County.

The School Board shall ensure that students with disabilities and their parents or guardians are guaranteed the appropriate procedural safeguards in the process of identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of an appropriate education program. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities will be educated with children who are not disabled. Prior to the identification, evaluation, placement, or provision of a free appropriate public education to a disabled student, a full explanation of all procedural safeguards shall be made available to parents.

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be designed and maintained for each child eligible for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The program will be developed in a meeting with the child's teachers, parent(s), the student (when appropriate), a school division representative qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education services and other individuals at the discretion of the parents or school division in accordance with State and federal law. This IEP shall be reviewed at least annually.

The IEP shall be inclusive of areas specified by state and federal statutes and regulations.

Adopted: July 28, 2011

Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.

29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.

42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-213, 22.1-215.

8 VAC 20-81-50.

8 VAC 20-81-80.

8 VAC 20-81-100.

8 VAC 20-81-110.

8 VAC 20-81-130.

8 VAC 20-81-170.

PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

The Buchanan County School Board shall approve a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students that includes the components identified in Board of Education regulations. The plan for the education of gifted students shall be accessible through the division's website and the division will ensure that printed copies of the plan are available to citizens who do not have online access.

The school division has uniform procedures for screening, referring, identifying, and serving students in kindergarten through twelfth grade who are gifted in general intellectual or specific academic aptitude.

The school division will provide written notification to and seek written consent from parents and legal guardians to conduct any required assessment to determine a referred student's eligibility for the division's gifted education program, and provide services for an identified gifted student in the division's gifted education program.

The School Board may establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members appointed by the School Board. The committee will reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division. If established, the committee will annually review the division's plan for the education of gifted students, including revisions, and determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented. The findings of the annual program effectiveness and the recommendations of the committee will be submitted annually in writing to the division superintendent and the School Board.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-18.1, 22.1-253.13:1.D.6.

8 VAC 20-40-40.

8 VAC 20-40-55.

8 VAC 20-40-60.

Cross Refs.: BCF Advisory Committees to the School Board
IKEB Acceleration

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Generally

The Buchanan County School Board recognizes that the education of each student is a responsibility shared by the school and the student's family. The Buchanan County School Board endorses the parental involvement goals of Title I (20 U.S.C. § 6318) and Title III (20 U.S.C. § 7012(e)) and encourages the regular participation by parents of all children including those eligible for Title I and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs in all aspects of those programs.

In keeping with these beliefs, it is the intention of the Buchanan County School Board to cultivate and support active parental involvement in student learning. The Buchanan County School Board will:

- provide activities that will educate parents regarding the intellectual and developmental needs of their children. These activities will promote cooperation between the division and other agencies or school/community groups (such as parent-teacher groups, the Head Start program, the Reading First program, Early Reading First program, Even Start program, and Parents as Teachers program) to furnish learning opportunities and disseminate information regarding parenting skills and child/adolescent development;
- implement strategies to involve parents in the educational process, including:
 - keeping families informed of opportunities for involvement and encouraging participation in various programs;
 - providing access to educational resources for parents and families to use with their children;
 - keeping families informed of the objectives of district educational programs as well as of their child's participation and progress with these programs;
- enable families to participate in the education of their children through a variety of roles. For example, family members may:
 - provide input into district policies
 - volunteer time within the classroom and school programs.
- provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to enhance their understanding of effective parent involvement strategies;
- perform regular evaluations of parent involvement at each school and in the district;
- provide access, upon request, to any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum;
- if practicable, provide information in a language understandable to parents.

In addition, for parents of students eligible for LEP programs, the School Board will inform such parents of how they can be active participants in assisting their children:

- to learn English;
- to achieve at high levels in core academic subjects; and
- to meet the same challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet.

Parental Involvement in Title I Plan

The Buchanan County School District encourages parents of children eligible to participate in Title I, Part A, programs to participate in the development of the District's Title I plan. Parents may participate by : attending the Title 1 annual meeting to review and make recommendations, serve on the district or individual school's Title 1 Advisory Committee, or by contacting the District's Title 1 director.

Parental Involvement in School Review and Improvement

The Buchanan County School District encourages parents of children eligible to participate in Title I, Part A, and LEP programs to participate in the process of school review and, if applicable, school improvement as implemented by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C.

§ 2316. Parents may participate by completing evaluation surveys, serving on or making recommendations to the Title 1 district or individual school advisory committees.

District Responsibilities

The Buchanan County School District, and each school which receives Title I, Part A, funds, **WILL**:

- provide assistance to parents of children served by the school or district, as applicable, in understanding topics such as Virginia's academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, state and local academic assessments, and how to monitor a child's progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their children;
- provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their childrens' achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement;
- educate teachers, pupil services personnel, principals, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school;
- to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, Even Start, the Home Instruction Programs for Preschool

Youngsters, the Parents as Teachers Program, and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children;

- ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand; and
- provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities as parents may request.

The Buchanan County School District, and each school which receives Title I, Part A, funds, **MAY:**

- involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training;
- provide necessary literacy training from Title I funds if the district has exhausted all other reasonable available sources of funding for such training;
- pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;
- train parents to enhance the involvement of other parents:
- arrange school meetings at a variety of times, or conduct in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children and parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school in order to maximize parental involvement and participation;
- adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement;
- establish a districtwide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parental involvement in programs supported under this section; and,
- develop appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses in parental involvement activities.

School Parental Involvement Policies

Each school served under Title I, Part A, shall jointly develop with and distribute to parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy, agreed on by such parents, that shall describe the means for carrying out the following:

- convening an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation in Title I, Part A, and to explain the requirements of Title I, Part A, and the rights of parents to be involved;
- offering a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide, with funds provided under this part, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement;
- involving parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I, Part A, programs including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 6312(b)(2), except that if a school has in place a process for involving parents in the joint planning and design of the school's programs, the school may use that process, if such process includes an adequate representation of parents of participating children;
- providing parents of participating children:
 - timely information about Title I, Part A, programs;
 - a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet; and
 - if requested by parents, opportunities for regular meetings to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children, and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible; and
- if the schoolwide program plan under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 6312(b)(2) is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submitting any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the District.

Parental Involvement in Allocation of Funding

Parents of children receiving services under Title I, Part A, shall be involved in the decisions regarding how funds provided under Title I, Part A, are allotted for parental involvement activities.

Policy Review

The content and effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated annually with regard to improving the academic quality of the schools receiving Title I, Part A, or LEP funds. This evaluation will identify barriers to greater participation by parents (particularly by parents who

are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background) and use the findings of that evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, this policy.

Adopted: July 19, 2004

Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. §§ 6312, 6316, 6318.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78.

Cross Refs.: AD Educational Philosophy
BCF Advisory Committees to the School Board
IAA Notification of Learning Objectives
IKA Parental Assistance with Instruction

REMEDIAL AND SUMMER INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

Generally

The School Board shall develop and implement programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for students who are educationally at risk, including those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades three through eight, or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs shall include components that are research based.

Any student who achieves a passing score on one or more, but not all, of the Standards of Learning assessments for the relevant grade level in grades three through eight may be required to attend a remediation program.

Any student who fails to achieve a passing score on all of the Standards of Learning assessments for the relevant grade level in grades three through eight or who fails an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit shall be required to attend a remediation program or to participate in another form of remediation. The superintendent shall require such students to take special programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation, which may include attendance in public summer school programs.

Remediation programs shall include, when applicable, a procedure for early identification of students who are at risk of failing the Standards of Learning assessments in grades three through eight or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs may also include summer school for all elementary and middle school grades and for all high school academic courses, as defined by regulations promulgated by the Board of Education, or other forms of remediation. Summer school remediation programs or other forms of remediation shall be chosen by the superintendent to be appropriate to the academic needs of the student.

Students who are required to attend such summer school programs or to participate in another form of remediation shall not be charged tuition.

The requirement for remediation may, however, be satisfied by the student's attendance in a program of prevention, intervention or remediation which has been selected by his parent, in consultation with the Superintendent or designee, and is either (i) conducted by an accredited private school or (ii) a special program which has been determined to be comparable to the required public school remediation program by the division superintendent. The costs of such private school remediation program or other special remediation program shall be borne by the student's parent.

The School Board shall annually evaluate and modify, as appropriate, the remediation plan based on an analysis of the percentage of students meeting their remediation goals and consideration of the pass rate on the Standards of Learning assessments.

Summer School

The courses offered and the quality of instruction in the summer school program shall be comparable to that offered during the regular school term. Students must meet the requirements for SOL testing if appropriate.

Credit for repeated work will ordinarily be granted on the same basis as that for new work. With prior approval of the principal, however, students may be allowed to enroll in repeat courses to be completed in not less than 70 clock hours of instruction per unit of credit. Students must meet the requirements for SOL testing if appropriate.

Summer school instruction which is provided as part of a remedial program shall be designed to improve specific identified student deficiencies.

Compulsory Attendance

When a student is required to participate in a remediation program pursuant to this policy, the Superintendent may seek immediate compliance with the compulsory school attendance laws if a reasonable effort to seek the student's attendance, including direct notification of the parents of such student of the attendance requirement and failure of the parents to secure the student's attendance, have failed and the superintendent determines that remediation of the student's poor academic performance, passage of the Standards of Learning Assessment in grades three through eight, or promotion is related directly to the student's attendance in the remediation program.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-254, 22.1-254.01.

8 VAC 20-131-120.

8 VAC 20-630-40.

Cross Refs.: BCF Advisory Committees To The School Board
 IKG Remediation Recovery Program

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS

Generally

The Buchanan County School Board shall provide programs to improve the education of limited English proficient children by assisting the children to learn English and meet Virginia's challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards.

Assessments

The School Board will annually assess the English proficiency of all students with limited English proficiency.

Notification

The School Board will, not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year, inform a parent or the parents of a limited English proficient child identified for participation in, or participating in, a program for limited English proficient students of

- the reasons for the identification of their child as limited English proficient and in need of placement in a language instruction education program;
- the child's level of English proficiency, how that level was assessed, and the status of the child's academic achievement;
- the method of instruction used in the program in which their child is, or will be, participating, and the methods of instruction used in other available programs, including how such programs differ in content, instruction goals, and use of English and a native language in instruction;
- how the program in which their child is, or will be participating will meet the educational strengths and needs of the child;
- how such program will specifically help their child learn English, and meet age appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- the specific exit requirements for such program, the expected rate of transition from such program into classrooms that are not tailored for limited English proficient children, and the expected rate of graduation from secondary school for such program;
- in the case of a child with a disability, how such program meets the objectives of the individualized education program of the child; and
- information pertaining to parental rights that includes written guidance
 - detailing the right that parents have to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request and the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another program or method of instruction, if available, and
 - assisting parents in selecting among various programs and methods of instruction, if more than one program or method is offered by the school division.

For a child who has not been identified for participation in a language instruction education program prior to the beginning of the school year, the School Board shall provide the notice detailed above within 2 weeks of the child being placed in the program.

The information described above will be provided to parents in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent can understand.

Students may be accepted and provided English-Second language programs if they entered school in Virginia for the first time after reaching their 12th birthday, and who have not reached age 22 on or before August 1 of the school year. No tuition shall be charged such students, if state funding is provided for such programs.

Adopted: July 28, 2011

Legal Ref.: 20 U.S.C. §§ 6311, 6312, 6825, 7012.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-5.

Cross Ref.: IGBC Parental Involvement

HOMEBOUND, CORRESPONDENCE, AND ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF INSTRUCTION

Homebound Instruction

The School Board shall maintain a program of homebound instruction for students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance based upon certification of need by a licensed physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical psychologist.

Credit for the work shall be awarded when it is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher, a person eligible to hold a Virginia license, or other appropriately licensed professional employed by the School Board, and there is evidence that the instructional time requirements or alternative means of awarding credit adopted by the school board have been met.

Correspondence Courses

Students may enroll in and receive a standard and verified unit of credit for supervised correspondence courses with prior approval of the principal. Standard units of credit will be awarded for the successful completion of such courses when the course is equivalent to that offered in the regular school program and the work is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher, or a person eligible to hold a Virginia license, approved by the local school board. Verified units of credit may be earned when the student has passed the SOL test associated with the correspondence course completed. The division superintendent will develop regulations governing this method of instruction in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Education.

Instruction through Alternative Technological Means

Standard units of credit will be awarded for the successful completion of courses delivered through emerging technologies and other similar means when the course is equivalent to that offered in the regular school program and the work is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher, or a person eligible to hold a Virginia license, and approved by the school board. Verified units of credit may be earned when the student has successfully completed the requirements and passed the SOL test associated with the course. The division superintendent will develop regulations governing this method of delivery of instruction in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Education.

Adopted: July 28, 2011

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-253.13:2, 54.1-2952.2, 54.1-2957.02.

8 VAC 20-131-180.

Cross Ref.: IGBGA

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Online Courses and Virtual School Programs

BUCHANAN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ONLINE COURSES AND VIRTUAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Buchanan County School Board may enter into contracts, consistent with the criteria approved by the Board of Education, with approved private or nonprofit organizations to provide multidivision online courses and virtual school programs. Such contracts shall be exempt from the Virginia Public Procurement Act.

Information regarding online courses and programs that are available through the school division will be posted on the division's website. The information will include the types of online courses and programs available to students through the division, when the division will pay course fees and other costs for nonresident students, and the granting of high school credit.

Any student enrolled in any online course or virtual program offered by the school division shall be enrolled in a public school in Virginia as provided in Va. Code § 22.1-3.1. The student's parent or guardian shall give written permission prior to the enrollment of the student in any full-time virtual program offered by the school division.

A student who resides in Buchanan County school division will not be charged tuition for enrolling in any online course or virtual program offered by the school division. However, tuition may be charged to students who do not reside within the boundaries of the school division.

Teachers who deliver instruction to students through online courses or virtual school programs must be licensed by the Board of Education and are subject to the requirements of Policy GCDA Effect of Criminal Conviction or Founded Complaint of Child Abuse or Neglect.

The administrator of a virtual school program must hold an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with educational and work experience in administering educational programs.

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply.

"Multidivision online provider" means (i) a private or nonprofit organization that enters into a contract with a local school board to provide online courses or programs through that school board to students who reside in Virginia both within and outside the geographical boundaries of that school division; (ii) a private or nonprofit organization that enters into contracts with multiple local school boards to provide online courses or programs to students in kindergarten through grade 12 through those school boards; or (iii) a local school board that provides online courses or programs to students who reside in Virginia but outside the geographical boundaries of that school division. However, "multidivision online provider" shall not include (a) a local school board's online learning program in which fewer than 10 percent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of that school division; (b) multiple local school boards that establish joint online courses or programs in which fewer than 10 percent of the students enrolled reside outside the geographical boundaries of those school divisions; (c) local school boards that provide online learning courses or programs for their students through an arrangement with a public or private institution of higher education; or (d) local school boards providing online courses or programs through a private or nonprofit organization that has been approved as a multidivision online provider.

"Online course" means a course or grade-level subject instruction that (i) is delivered by a multidivision online provider primarily electronically using the Internet or other computer-based methods and (ii) is taught by a teacher primarily from a remote location, with student access to the teacher given synchronously, asynchronously, or both.

"Virtual school program" means a series of online courses with instructional content that (i) is delivered by a multidivision online provider primarily electronically using the Internet or other computer-based methods; (ii) is taught by a teacher primarily from a remote location, with student access to the teacher given synchronously, asynchronously, or both; (iii) is delivered as a part-time or full-time program; and (iv) has an online component with online lessons and tools for student and data management.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-212.24, 22.1-212.25, 22.1-212.26, 22.1-212.27, 22.1-296.1, 22.1-296.2, and 22.1-296.4.

Cross Refs.: DJF Purchasing Procedures
GCDA Effect of Criminal Conviction or Founded Complaint of Child abuse or Neglect

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

As special needs are determined, alternative programs may be established by the Board within existing schools or at separate sites that are within the jurisdiction of the Buchanan County Schools. No person of school age meeting the residency requirements of § 22.1-3 may be charged tuition for enrollment in an alternative program offered as a regional or divisionwide initiative by the School Board.

Proposals for alternative school programs shall be developed by the superintendent or his/her designee and will be submitted to the Board for review and endorsement prior to implementation. Proposals shall include:

1. A statement of justification for the alternative program explaining how it will meet the special needs or expectations of the target population and the community;
2. A plan which delineates the proposed organizational structure as it relates to staffing and the scope and structure of the total instructional program;
3. A statement of financial impact identifying all costs, including administration, staffing, equipping, supplying, transportation, support services, and maintaining the program;
4. A statement of related impact explaining how the proposed program will affect and interrelate with other programs and populations served in existing programs and facilities;
5. A statement of authentication verifying that all aspects of the program are in compliance with all appropriate federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and there is compliance with all applicable accreditation requirements;
6. If the proposal presents a potential conflict with existing regulations of the State Department of Education, special evidence of authorization from the State Department of Education must accompany the proposal;
7. A plan for evaluation that defines anticipated outcomes and establishes criteria and procedures for evaluating achieved outcomes.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:1,
8 VAC 20-30-10.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Students and their parents shall be notified of the availability of dual enrollment, advanced placement classes, the International Baccalaureate program, and Academic Year Governor's School Programs, the qualifications for enrolling in such classes and programs, and the availability of financial assistance to low-income and needy students to take the advanced placement and International Baccalaureate examinations. Students and their parents shall also be notified of the program with a community college to enable students to complete an associate's degree or a one-year Uniform Certificate of General Studies concurrent with a high school diploma. The superintendent shall promulgate regulations to implement this policy, which shall ensure the provision of timely and adequate notice to students and their parents.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:1.D.

Cross Ref.: LEB Advanced/Alternative Courses for Credit

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Generally

Public school facilities are devoted primarily to instructional programs and school-sponsored activities. Curriculum-related student organizations are an extension of the regular school program. Their function is to enhance the participants' educational experience and supplement course materials. The activities of these organizations should bear a clear relationship to the regular curriculum.

Secondary school students may organize and conduct meetings of noncurriculum-related groups. Any secondary school which permits one or more noncurriculum-related student group to meet on school premises during noninstructional time will provide equal access to any students who wish to conduct a meeting without discrimination on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at such meetings.

Noncurriculum-related student groups may use school facilities provided that

- the group's meetings are voluntary and student-initiated;
- the group is not sponsored by the school, the government, or any government agent or employee;
- agents or employees of the school or government are present at religious meetings only in a nonparticipatory capacity;
- meetings do not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities at the school; and
- nonschool persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities of the group.

Meetings of Student Organizations

The principal of each school will determine the times and places which are available for the meetings of student organizations. The principal will also develop procedures for scheduling meetings of student organizations. Meeting times will be limited to non-instructional time.

Faculty Involvement

Curriculum-related student organizations must be sponsored and supervised by one or more school faculty members and approved by the principal. Faculty sponsors will participate in the supervision and direction of all activities of the organization and will attend all meetings and activities.

Noncurriculum-related student organizations do not have a faculty sponsor. However, a member of the school's staff shall attend every meeting or activity of such organizations in a nonparticipatory capacity for purposes of general supervision. The organization is responsible for assuring the presence of a staff member for its meetings.

No school employee will be compelled to attend a meeting of any student organization if the content of such meeting is contrary to the beliefs of that school employee.

Compliance with Law and Policy

Student organizations shall not engage in any activity which is contrary to law, division policy, or school rules; which disrupts or clearly threatens to disrupt the orderly operation of the school; or which would adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of any students or staff members. Failure to comply with these provisions shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

Adopted: July 26, 2012

Revised:

Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. § 4071.

Cross Refs.: KF Distribution of Information/Materials
KG Community Use of School Facilities

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BUCHANAN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education Programs shall be offered to those residents of the school division over the age of compulsory school attendance who are not enrolled in the regular public school program and who are functioning below the high school completion level. The School Board shall seek to ensure that every adult participating in such a program has the opportunity to earn a general educational development (GED) certificate or a high school diploma. Such programs may be conducted solely by the School Board or through a collaborative arrangement between the School Board and other School Boards or agencies. Additional educational programs for adults also may be offered. Tuition and fees shall be established by the School Board.

Adopted: July 20, 2006

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-210; 22.1-223 through 22.1-226.4, 22.1-253.13:1.D.7.

8 VAC 20-30-10,

8 VAC 20-360-10.

Cross Refs.: JEG Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance
IKF Standards of Learning Tests and Graduation Requirements

GROUPING FOR INSTRUCTION

The grouping of students within individual schools for instructional purposes shall be based solely on:

1. the best interests of the student,
2. the educational level, or achievement level of the student,
3. the availability of space,
4. the best educational climate for learning, and
5. the student's best chance for success.

Grouping shall remain flexible in order to take advantage of the best educational research currently available.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70, 22.1-78

CLASS SIZE

The Buchanan County School Board will assign licensed instructional personnel in a manner that produces divisionwide ratios of students in average daily membership to full-time equivalent teaching positions, excluding special education teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and librarians, that are not greater than the following ratios:

- 24 to one in kindergarten with no class being larger than 29 students; if the average daily membership in any kindergarten class exceeds 24 pupils, a full-time teacher's aide will be assigned to the class;
- 24 to one in grades one, two, and three with no class being larger than 30 students;
- 25 to one in grades four through six with no class being larger than 35 students; and
- 24 to one in English classes in grades six through 12.

In addition, the Buchanan County School Board shall assign instructional personnel in a manner that produces schoolwide ratios of students in average daily memberships to full-time equivalent teaching positions of 21 to one in middle schools and high schools.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:2.C.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Buchanan County School Board is responsible for the selection, evaluation, approval, and use of instructional materials. The superintendent or his/her designee will periodically review guidelines and procedures for the selection of instructional materials and bring recommendations for changes to the Board.

The procedures for selection and evaluation of instructional materials shall offer a thorough and efficient approach which ensures that appropriate instructional materials are selected, and provide an opportunity for the professional staff and community to participate and be informed on the selection and use of instructional materials. The procedures will include

- local criteria for selection of instructional materials;
- evaluation of materials in relation to instructional goals and objectives;
- an evaluation committee which should include, when appropriate, parents, students, teachers, supervisors, and nonparent patrons;
- opportunity for the examination of materials by appropriate committees and individuals;
- notice to parents that materials under consideration for approval will be available at designated locations for review by any interested citizens. Provisions should be made for those reviewing such materials to present their comments and observations, if any, to the school board;
- procedures for the reconsideration of challenged materials; and
- special emphasis on the thorough evaluation of materials related to controversial or sensitive topics such as Family Life Education.

Adopted: July 30, 2009

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-238.

8 VAC 20-170-10.

8 VAC 20-230-10.

Cross Ref.: IGAH Family Life Education
IIAA Textbook Adoption, Selection, and Purchase
IIAB Supplementary Materials Selection and Adoption

TEXTBOOK SELECTION, ADOPTION, AND PURCHASE

The School Board shall adopt textbooks, including print or electronic media for student use that serves as the primary curriculum basis for a grade-level subject or course from the list of textbooks approved by the Board of Education. The School Board may also adopt books which are not on the state-adopted list in accordance with the Board of Education regulations.

The Buchanan County School Board will adopt textbooks for use in the local division based upon recommendations presented by the superintendent following the procedures described in Policy IIA Instructional Materials.

The Buchanan County School Board may either enter into written term contracts or issue purchase orders with publishers of textbooks approved by the Board of Education. Such written contracts or purchase orders are exempt from the Virginia Public Procurement Act (Va. Code § 2.2-4300 et seq.) The contract price shall not exceed the lowest wholesale price at which the book or books involved in the contract are currently bid under contract anywhere in the United States. If, subsequent to the date of any contract entered into by the School Board, the prices of books named in the contract are reduced or the terms of the contract are made more favorable to purchase anywhere in the United States or a special or other edition of any book named in the contract is sold outside of Virginia at a lower price than contracted in Virginia, the publisher shall grant the same reduction or terms to the School Board and give the School Board the option of using such special or other edition adapted for use in Virginia and at the lowest price at which such special edition is sold elsewhere and the contract shall so state.

Contracts and purchase orders with publishers of textbooks approved by the Board of Education shall require the publisher to furnish an electronic file of the textbook in the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) format that will then be deposited in the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) from which accessible versions of the particular textbook may be produced for students with print disabilities, as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 1474. Publishers shall deliver the NIMAS file of the textbook on or before the date of delivery of the regular text version.

The School Board shall order directly from the respective publishers the books needed to supply the public schools in the school division. The publishers shall ship the books to the school board. The purchase price of such books shall be paid directly to the publishers by the school board.

Adopted: July 30, 2009

Legal Refs.: Constitution of Virginia, Art. VIII, § 3

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-238, 22.1-241.

8 VAC 20-230-10.

Cross Ref.: IIA Instructional Materials

KQ Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Board delegates the responsibility for the selection and use of supplemental materials to the individual schools. Selection and use shall be in accordance with policies and regulations of the State Board of Education. The same care shall be exercised in the selection of supplemental materials as in the selection of other types of instructional materials.

Materials used by students under the guidance of teachers to extend, expand, and supplement basal materials constitute an integral part of the instructional program. Supplemental materials are those items which are used to assist the teaching and learning process and include such items as magazines, newspapers, charts, pictures, certain workbooks, kits, videos, film strips, and games. Materials selected for supplemental use must relate directly to the established objectives of the course or content area in which they are used.

Teachers must carefully review materials prior to use and exercise a high degree of professional judgment in their selection and use of supplemental materials, to ensure that the use of such materials serves to both support and complement the basic educational objectives within the specific subject areas and classrooms.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-238.

Cross Refs.: IIA Supplementary Materials
IIAA Textbook Selection, Adoption, and Purchase
KQ Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

INNOVATIVE OR EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS

Experimental and innovative programs that are not consistent with accreditation standards or other regulations promulgated by the Board of Education shall be submitted to the Board of Education for approval prior to implementation.

The parent or guardian of a child enrolled or engaged in any research or experimentation program or project which is funded by the United States Department of Education shall be entitled to inspect all instructional materials which will be used in conjunction with such program or project.

Any complaints arising under this policy may be submitted under Policies KL or KLB, as appropriate.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Ref.: 20 U.S.C. §1232h.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70, 22.1-78

8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES/MEDIA CENTERS

The primary function of a school's library media center is to implement, enrich and support the educational program of the school. The center provides a wide range of materials at various levels of sophistication with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.

To this end the School Board declares that the primary responsibilities of the library media center are:

1. To provide materials that will stimulate the acquisition of factual knowledge and the development of literary appreciation, aesthetic values and ethical standards;
2. To provide a source of information which when consulted may enable pupils to make informed judgments;
3. To provide materials containing a wide range of views on issues so that students may develop the practice of critical reading and thinking;
4. To provide materials representative of religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contribution to the American heritage; and,
5. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library media center.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Ref.: 8 VAC 20-131-190.

ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM USE

The School Board provides a computer system, including the internet, to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. The term computer system includes hardware, software, data, communication lines and devices, terminals, printers, CD-ROM devices, tape drives, servers, mainframe and personal computers, the internet and other internal or external networks.

All use of the Division's computer system must be (1) in support of education and/or research, or (2) for legitimate school business. Use of the computer system is a privilege, not a right. Any communication or material used on the computer system, including electronic mail or other files deleted from a user's account, may be monitored or read by school officials.

The Division Superintendent shall establish administrative procedures, for the School Board's approval, containing the appropriate uses, ethics and protocol for the computer system. The procedures shall include:

- (1) a prohibition against use by division employees and students of the division's computer equipment and communications services for sending, receiving, viewing or downloading illegal material via the Internet;
- (2) provisions, including the selection and operation of a technology protection measure for the division's computers having Internet access to filter or block Internet access through such computers, that seek to prevent access to
 - (a) child pornography as set out in Va. Code § 18.2-374.1:1 or as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256;
 - (b) obscenity as defined by Va. Code § 18.2-372 or 18 U.S.C. § 1460; and
 - (c) material that the school division deems to be harmful to juveniles as defined in Va. Code § 18.2-390, material that is harmful to minors as defined in 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(7)(G), and material that is otherwise inappropriate for minors;
- (3) provisions establishing that the technology protection measure is enforced during any use of the Division's computers by minors;
- (4) provisions establishing that the online activities of minors will be monitored;
- (5) provisions designed to educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response;
- (6) provisions designed to prevent unauthorized online access by minors, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- (7) provisions prohibiting the unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors;
- (8) a component on Internet safety for students that is integrated in the division's instructional program.

Use of the School Division's computer system shall be consistent with the educational or instructional mission or administrative function of the Division as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of students. The Division's computer system is not a public forum.

Each teacher, administrator, student and parent/guardian of each student shall sign the Acceptable Computer System Use Agreement, GAB-E1/IIBEA-E2, before using the Division's computer system. The failure of any student, teacher or administrator to follow the terms of the

agreement, this policy or accompanying regulation may result in loss of computer system privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

The School Board is not responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable when using the computer system or for any information retrieved via the Internet. Furthermore, the School Board will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the computer system.

The Division Superintendent shall submit to the Virginia Department of Education this policy and accompanying regulation biennially.

Adopted: July 30, 2009

Legal Refs: 18 U.S.C. §§ 1460, 2256.
47 U.S.C. § 254.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 18.2-372, 18.2-374.1:1, 18.2-390, 22.1-70.2, and 22.1-78.

Cross Refs.: GCPD Professional Staff Members: Contract Status and Discipline
GDPD Support Staff Members: Contract Status and Discipline
JFC Student Conduct
JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct

ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM USE

All use of the Buchanan County School Division's computer system shall be consistent with the School Board's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. The term computer system includes hardware, software, data, communication lines and devices, terminals, printers, CD-ROM devices, tape drives, servers, mainframe and personal computers, the internet and any other internal or external network.

Computer System Use-Terms and Conditions:

1. **Acceptable Use.** Access to the Division's computer system shall be (1) for the purposes of education or research and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Division or (2) for legitimate school business.

2. **Privilege.** The use of the Division's computer system is a privilege, not a right.

3. **Unacceptable Use.** Each user is responsible for his or her actions on the computer system. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to:

- using the network for any illegal or unauthorized activity, including violation of copyright or contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any federal, state, or local law.
- sending, receiving, viewing or downloading illegal material via the computer system.
- unauthorized downloading of software.
- using the computer system for private financial or commercial purposes.
- wastefully using resources, such as file space.
- gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities.
- posting material created by another without his or her consent.
- submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any obscene, profane, threatening, illegal, or other inappropriate material.
- using the computer system while access privileges are suspended or revoked.
- vandalizing the computer system, including destroying data by creating or spreading viruses or by other means.
- intimidating, harassing, or coercing others.
- threatening illegal or immoral acts.

4. **Network Etiquette.** Each user is expected to abide by generally accepted rules of etiquette, including the following:

- be polite.
- users shall not forge, intercept or interfere with electronic mail messages.
- use appropriate language. The use of obscene, lewd, profane, lascivious, threatening or disrespectful language is prohibited.

- users shall not post personal information other than directory information as defined in Policy JO Student Records about themselves or others.
- users shall respect the computer system's resource limits.
- users shall not post chain letters or download large files.
- users shall not use the computer system to disrupt others.
- users shall not modify or delete data owned by others.

5. **Liability.** The School Board makes no warranties for the computer system it provides. The School Board shall not be responsible for any damages to the user from use of the computer system, including loss of data, non-delivery or missed delivery of information, or service interruptions. The School Division denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the computer system. The user agrees to indemnify the School Board for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the School Board relating to or arising out of any violation of these procedures.

6. **Security.** Computer system security is a high priority for the school division. If any user identifies a security problem, the user shall notify the building principal or system administrator immediately. All users shall keep their passwords confidential and shall follow computer virus protection procedures.

7. **Vandalism.** Intentional destruction of or interference with any part of the computer system through creating or downloading computer viruses or by any other means is prohibited.

8. **Charges.** The School Division assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees as a result of using the computer system, including telephone or long-distance charges.

9. **Electronic Mail.** The School Division's electronic mail system is owned and controlled by the School Division. The School Division may provide electronic mail to aid students and staff in fulfilling their duties and as an education tool. Electronic mail is not private. Students' electronic mail will be monitored. The electronic mail of staff may be monitored and accessed by the School Division. Unauthorized access to an electronic mail account by any student or employee is prohibited. Users shall be held personally liable for the content of any electronic message they create. Downloading any file attached to an electronic message is prohibited unless the user is certain of that message's authenticity and the nature of the file.

10. **Enforcement.** Software will be installed on the division's computers having Internet access to filter or block internet access through such computers to child pornography and obscenity. The online activities of users may also be monitored manually. **Any violation of these regulations shall result in loss of computer system privileges and may also result in appropriate disciplinary action, as determined by School Board policy, or legal action.**

Adopted: July 30, 2009

Legal Refs: 18 U.S.C. §§ 1460, 2256.
47 U.S.C. § 254.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 18.2-372, 18.2-374.1:1, 18.2-390, 22.1-70.2 and 22.1-78.

Guidelines and Resources for Internet Safety in Schools, Virginia Department of Education (Second Edition October 2007)

Cross Refs: GCPD Professional Staff Members: Contract Status and Discipline
GDPD Support Staff Members: Contract Status and Discipline
JFC Student Conduct
JFC-R Standards of Student Conduct

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS:
ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM USE

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Buchanan County School Board offers your student the use of electronic communications through the Buchanan County School Division's computer system. Your student will be able to communicate with other schools, colleges, organizations and individuals around the world through the internet and other electronic information systems/networks.

Part of the School Division's responsibility in preparing students for the 21st century is to provide them access to the tools they will be using as adults. The internet will likely be one of these tools. Through the Division's computer system your student will have access to databases, libraries and computer services from all over the world. We accept the responsibility of teaching your student about his/her role as a "network" citizen and the code of ethics involved with this new community.

With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility on the part of your student. It is important that you and your student read the enclosed division policy, administrative regulation and agreement form and discuss these requirements. The Division takes precautions to prevent access to inappropriate material. However, it is impossible to control access to all material and a user may access inappropriate material.

In order for your student to take advantage of this educational opportunity, your authorization is needed. Attached to this letter are the Acceptable Computer System Use Policy and Regulation (GAB/IIBEA) and the Acceptable Computer System Use Agreement which both you and your student must sign before your child may use the computer system. Please review these materials carefully with your student before signing the required agreement.

Sincerely,

ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER SYSTEM USE AGREEMENT

Each employee must sign this Agreement as a condition for using the School Division's computer system. Each student and his or her parent/guardian must sign this Agreement before being granted use of the School Division's computer system. Read this Agreement carefully before signing.

Prior to signing this Agreement, read Policy and Regulation GAB/IIBEA, Acceptable Computer System Use. If you have any questions about this policy or regulation, contact your supervisor or your student's principal.

I understand and agree to abide by the School Division's Acceptable Computer System Use Policy and Regulation. I understand that the School Division may access and monitor my use of the computer system, including my use of the internet, e-mail and downloaded material, without prior notice to me. I further understand that should I violate the Acceptable Use Policy or Regulation, my computer system privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action and/or legal action may be taken against me.

Student/Employee Signature _____ Date _____

I have read this Agreement and Policy and Regulation GAB/IIBEA. I understand that access to the computer system is intended for educational purposes and the Buchanan County school division has taken precautions to eliminate inappropriate material. I also recognize, however, that it is impossible for the School Division to restrict access to all inappropriate material and I will not hold the School Division responsible for information acquired on the computer system. I have discussed the terms of this agreement, policy and regulation with my student.

I grant permission for my student to use the computer system and for the School Division to issue an account for my student.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____
(Please Print)

Adopted: June 23, 2005

FIELD TRIPS

The use of field trips to extend the learning opportunities provided in the regular instructional program and to provide opportunities for competition for students in extracurricular programs is a valuable activity. Trips shall be approved by the superintendent or designee. Principals are expected to consider the educational value of the trip, the availability of the learning opportunities and the distance, time and expense involved in the trip. Principals are also responsible for following all procedures for requesting approval of field trips. Only properly insured modes of transportation are to be used for school trips. Principals should insure that no student is denied participation on a field trip because of the expense of the trip.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70, 22.1-78, 22.1-176.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The Buchanan County Public Schools support and encourage the active participation of parents and members of the community in providing and extending educational opportunities for children. The involvement of parents, volunteers, and others in the community who can serve as a resource to schools is a fundamentally important component of successful school programs. The administration of each school will direct the activities of parents, volunteers and other community resources at the building level.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-70, 22.1-78.

8 VAC 20-131-20.

8 VAC 20-131-270.

Cross Ref.: KQ Commercial, Promotional, and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM

Each school will provide the following guidance and counseling services to all students:

- academic guidance which assists students and their parents to acquire knowledge of the curricula choices available to students, to plan a program of studies, to arrange and interpret academic testing, and to seek post-secondary academic opportunities.
- career guidance which helps students to acquire information and plan action about work, jobs, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities.
- personal/social counseling which assists a student to develop an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict and to define individual goals, reflecting their interests, abilities and aptitudes. Information and records of personal/social counseling will be kept confidential and separate from a student's educational records and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law. Parents may elect, by notifying their child's school in writing, to have their child not participate in personal/social counseling.
- employment counseling and placement services which furnish information relating to the employment opportunities available to students graduating from or leaving the public schools. Such information will be provided to secondary students and will include all types of employment opportunities, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, the military, career education schools, and the teaching profession. In providing such services, the school board will consult and cooperate with the Virginia Employment Commission, the Department of Labor and Industry, local business and labor organizations, and career schools.

No student will be required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents object.

The guidance and counseling program will not include the use of counseling techniques which are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis, or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychopathology.

Parents will be notified annually about the counseling programs which are available to their children. The notification will include the purpose and general description of the programs, information regarding ways parents may review materials to be used in guidance and counseling programs at their child's school and information about the procedures by which parents may limit their child's participation in such programs.

Adopted: July 20, 2006

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-209.

8 VAC 20-620-10.

Cross Ref.: JO Student Records

PARENTAL ASSISTANCE WITH INSTRUCTION

The Buchanan County School Board encourages parents to provide instructional assistance to their children in the home. The school division offers a voluntary training program to the parents of children in kindergarten through third grade, to assist them in developing the skills necessary to provide effective instructional assistance to their children. Information regarding parent training on instructional assistance shall be available in every elementary school within the division.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:7.C.5.

Cross Refs.: IGBC Parental Involvement

HOMEWORK

Homework can provide an essential communication link between the school and the home. One measure of a program or course is the quality of the work done at home by the student. A strong home-school partnership, with many lasting benefits for the individual student and his/her family, can be greatly enhanced by a sound program of homework. In addition, homework should be an important tool in developing independent thought, self-direction, and self-discipline. It can assist the student in developing good work habits and in the wise use of time.

Guidelines for homework include:

1. Homework should be assigned after introduction and thorough explanation of the skills necessary to successfully complete the assignment.
2. Homework should be assigned in such a manner that it will be clearly understood by all students.
3. Homework should serve a valid purpose and be closely related to classroom activities.
4. A student's access to resource materials should be considered when making assignments.
5. Homework should be evaluated promptly and returned to the student. Appropriate rewards should be given to those students who successfully complete assigned work. Effort and competency should be recognized and rewarded.
6. Teachers should seek to determine the causes if a student regularly fails to complete assigned work. Teachers should not avoid giving homework because they believe students will not do the work.
7. Excessive homework, like the absence of homework, should be avoided.
8. Homework should not be used for disciplinary purposes.
9. Teachers and administrators should take appropriate steps to communicate with parents regarding the division's homework policy and to solicit their support.

Adopted: July 23, 2008

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78.

Cross Ref.: IB Academic Freedom

INSTRUCTION

PROMOTION/RETENTION

Elementary School

I. PROMOTION

- A. Grade placement should provide the best opportunity to make reasonable progress. It is essential to consider children's abilities, their attainment, and the grade or section in which they can work most satisfactorily. Special attention should be given to the needs of all pupils, whether gifted, average, or below average. Since our concern is for the growth of each pupil, regular progress through school is essential.
- B. Every effort should be made by the staff to make certain that every child understands that promotion is earned rather than automatic.
- C. Reading and math skills and achievement of a passing score on the SOL tests will be key factors in promotion and retention.

II. RETENTION

The principal and appropriate staff members should make the decision as to whether pupils are retained in a grade. However, this should be done with the full understanding of pupils and parents and should always be done in the best interest of the pupils and their development. Students will be considered for retention in Grades K-5 under the following conditions:

- A. The student has not been previously retained more than one time in Grades K-5.
- B. The student is not able to retain and apply the basic academic skills that have been defined as the minimum expectations for that grade level, according to county expectations and basic learning skills.
- C. The student has missed 10 or more days of school in which little or no make-up work was done, Exception: Certification by a physician.
- D. Before retention is to be recommended a second time in Grades K-5 to a parent, various approaches and programs, such as Title I, remedial reading, and other special programs, should have been considered and found inappropriate.

Elementary School (continued)

- E. Parents must be informed on the progress report or in writing by the end of the first semester (18 weeks) that retention is a distinct possibility for their child. Notification will again be sent to parents at the end of the fourth six-week grading period (24 weeks). In addition, teachers are encouraged to arrange conferences with parents of these students. Students who transfer into a school after the end of the first semester may be considered for retention. Parents of transfer students will be notified in writing of possible retention as soon as it can reasonably be determined that retention is a possibility.
- F. For each student in question, a promotion/retention advisory committee will be established consisting of the individual's teacher(s), a principal or assistant principal, and a resource person, if applicable. This committee will review all relevant data regarding the student and make a recommendation to pass or retain to the principal. Parents of the students shall be invited to attend the committee meeting,
- G. When a child is being considered for retention, the teacher should submit a cumulative folder of a student's daily work to the committee for review.
- H. For grades in which SOL tests are given, achievement of a passing score on the SOL tests shall be one of the multiple factors considered in making decisions regarding retention.
- I. Notification must be made in writing to the parents at least fifteen working days prior to the close of school.
- J. Promotion and retention decisions which are contested by parents must be appealed in writing as described in the third and final retention notification from the school to the division superintendent within 3 days after receipt of notification of retention notification.

III. ACCELERATION

The principal and appropriate staff members should make the decision as to whether a pupil is accelerated (skipped) to the next highest-grade level. However, this should be done with the full understanding of the pupil and parents and should always be done in the best interest of the pupil and the pupil's development. Students will be considered for acceleration after consideration of the following.

- A. The student has been referred to or is receiving assistance from the school Gifted Education Coordinator.
- B. The student has already been provided enrichment in the classroom and there are no appropriate instructional groups at the present grade level.
- C. The student is referred to the Child Study Committee.
- D. The test results and observation (maturity, work habits, independence) provide evidence that the student is ready for acceleration. Normally, the student is then accelerated for math and/or language arts on a trial basis. If the student is achieving satisfactorily, other content areas may be considered for acceleration. Achievement of passing scores on SOL tests shall be considered in making promotion decisions.
- E. The student is monitored to ensure that he/she possesses the maturity and socialization skills necessary to be fully accelerated into the next grade level. During the "trial" period, the parents will be kept abreast of the progress and social adjustments of their child. After a period of nine weeks, the parents, teacher, principal, and school gifted coordinator hold a conference to discuss the student's progress and to determine if the student should be fully accelerated in all subject areas.
- F. Based upon staff's professional judgment and the Child Study Committee's recommendation, the principal shall make the decision on the question of acceleration.

PROMOTION/RETENTION
MIDDLE SCHOOLS

I. PROMOTION/PLACEMENT

- A. Grade placement should provide the best opportunity to make reasonable progress. It is essential to consider children's abilities, their achievement, and the grade or section in which they can work most satisfactorily. Special attention should be given to the needs of all pupils. Since our concern is for the growth of each pupil, regular process through school is essential.
- B. Every effort should be made to the staff to make certain that every child understands that promotion is earned rather than automatic.
- C. Achievement in language arts, math science, and social studies will be the key factors in promotion and retention with emphasis in language arts and math skills. This level of achievement may be determined by classroom performance, learning assessments, and standardized test results where appropriate. Achievement of a passing score on the SOL tests shall be considered in making promotion/retention decisions.
- D. A student which is not successful in the four core academic areas may be considered for placement in the next grade when the placement committee and/or the principal determines that this placement would in the overall best interest of the student.
- E. The promotion/retention committee may decide to retain and then review cases prior to the beginning of school in August if the student is successful in an appropriate educational experience during the summer.

II. PLACEMENT INTO GRADE NINE

- A. In ninth grade placements, the middle school principal will provide the high school principal a list of students being placed who require special services.
- B. Principals of sending and receiving schools will confer and receive information on those students pending placement; however, this meeting will not be for the purpose of possible refusal of a student being placed in the ninth grade.

III. RETENTION

- A. In all cases of retention, the teacher will have communicated to the parents the possibility of course grade failure at the end of the first semester (18 weeks) and at the end of the 4th six-week grading period (24 weeks).
- B. A committee appointed by the principal and made up of an administrator and appropriate staff will review each student's total performance. Parents of the student should be involved in the placement process. Factors that must be considered by the reviewing committee are as follows:
1. The recommendation of the student's teachers.
 2. Achievement of a passing score on SOL tests is one of multiple factors to be considered in making retention decisions.
 3. The student has not been able to retain and apply basic academic skills.
 4. The student fails to complete assignments on a regular basis.
 5. The student's physical, social and/or emotional development is not consistent with expected behavior/development of his/her age level.
 6. The student has missed 10 school days in which little or no make-up work was done. Exception: Certification by a physician.
 7. The student's previous number of retentions is a factor in the decision to promote, place, or retain. A full psycho/socio educational evaluation of the student should be completed if a previous retention has occurred at any time in Grades 1-8.
 8. Whether the instructional program in which the retained student will participate meets the identified needs of the student.

After consideration of the above, the committee will recommend to the principal to either place or retain the student.

- C. The principal will then inform the student's teachers and the student's parents/guardians. (3rd notice)
- D. Placement and retention decisions which are contested by parents may be appealed in writing to the division superintendent within 3 days of receiving notification of retention.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

HIGH SCHOOL

I. PROMOTION/RETENTION

The following criteria shall be used in determining promotion to the next higher-grade.

A. Ninth Grade

Students will be promoted to the ninth grade when they have successfully completed the eighth grade, as defined in the middle school section of this regulation.

B. Tenth Grade

Students will be promoted to the tenth grade when they have earned 6 units of credit.

C. Eleventh Grade

Students will be promoted to the eleventh grade when they have earned 13 units of credit.

D. Twelfth Grade

1. Students will be promoted to the twelfth grade when they have earned 20 units of credit.
2. All alternative programs require the approval of the principal of the high school from which the student will graduate.

II. EDUCATIONAL SEQUENCE IN GRADES 9-12

- A. In sequential courses such as English, Mathematics, and foreign language, students will not be enrolled in a higher level course until they have completed the lower level course, except with the permission of the principal.
- B. Students who have been retained are not prevented from taking subjects in a grade in which they are not classified, as long as they have met the course prerequisites.

III. PARENT NOTIFICATION

- A. Parents of students who are failing any high school course will be notified by the classroom teacher at the end of the 2nd grading period on the progress report card or by letter. In addition, teachers are encouraged to arrange conferences with the parents of the students.

The principal is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this regulation.

Adopted: January 20, 2003

Buchanan County School Board

First Notice

Buchanan County Public Schools
P.O. Box 833
Grundy, Virginia 24614-0833

**NOTIFICATION FROM ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND
TEACHER OF POSSIBLE RETENTION OF STUDENT**

Date: _____

Dear parent(s) of:

Policy IKE, Promotion/Retention require that we notify parents should there be a possibility that their child could be retained in his/her current grade for the next school year.

We have examined _____ progress in relationship to his/her potential and Buchanan County grade-level expectations.

It may be to _____ advantage to remain in _____ grade for another year.

It is the philosophy of Buchanan County Public Schools that children are not to be automatically promoted from one grade to another. The child's reading and math skills are key factors in deciding on promotion or retention. Also considered are work habits, communication skills, the child's ability and maturity levels.

If sufficient progress is not made during the next semester, the school retention committee may recommend that your child be retained in his/her present grade.

We will be in contact with you to share concerns and suggestions on working together to improve your child's school performance.

Sincerely,

Signature of Teacher

Signature of Principal

Name of School

School Telephone Number

Buchanan County Public Schools
P.O. Box 833
Grundy, Virginia 24614-0833

**NOTIFICATION FROM ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AND
TEACHER OF POSSIBLE RETENTION OF STUDENT**

Date: _____

Dear parent(s) of:

According to Policy IKE, Promotion/Retention, we are required to notify parents in writing if retention continues to be a possibility for their child at the end of the fourth grading period.

We have discussed your child's progress over the past six weeks and, at this time, retention is one of the alternatives we continue to consider. A review committee will meet prior to the decision on promotion/retention.

If you have questions at this time, please contact us to arrange a personal or telephone conference.

Sincerely,

Signature of Teacher

Signature of Principal

Name of School

School Telephone Number

Third Notice

Buchanan County Public Schools
P.O. Box 833
Grundy, Virginia 24614-0833

**NOTIFICATION FROM ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OF
RETENTION OF STUDENT**

Date: _____

Dear

This letter is to formally notify you that your child, _____, a student in grade _____ will be reassigned to grade _____ for the next school year.

I met with our Placement Committee and evaluated all available information related to your child. The decision to retain your child in the current grade indicates that your child needs additional time to master the skills designated for the grade level.

If you wish to appeal this decision, you must notify the superintendent in writing within three school days after receipt of this letter.

The address for the superintendent is Buchanan County Public Schools, P.O. Box 833, Grundy, Virginia 24614.

Sincerely,

Signature of Principal

Name of School

School Telephone Number

End of Second Grading Period

Buchanan County Public Schools
P.O. Box 833
Grundy, Virginia 24614-0833

NOTIFICATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER OF POSSIBLE COURSE FAILURE

Date: _____

TO: Parents of: _____

FROM: Teacher's name: _____

SUBJECT: _____

I am taking this opportunity to report that your son/daughter is making unsatisfactory progress in my class, and the possibility does exist that he/she may fail this course for the year. Below are some of the possible causes of this unsatisfactory progress:

- Failure to attend school regularly
- Failure to come to class with proper materials
- Incomplete homework assignments
- Work not turned in on time
- Not adequately prepared for tests
- Lack of class participation
- Other: _____

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss your child's progress to date.

Sincerely,

Name of School

School Telephone Number

ACCELERATION

The curriculum and schedule of elementary, middle and high schools shall provide flexibility in placing certain students in programs or subjects normally considered above their grade level. Scheduling eighth grade students into subjects above the normal grade level should be done with counseling based on evidence of ability, past scholastic achievement, and cooperation of the individual student and his parents or guardian.

When students below the ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grades 9 through 12, credit shall be counted toward meeting the standard units required for graduation provided the courses meet the requirements of the Standards of Learning or are equivalent in content and academic rigor as those courses offered at the secondary level, or verified units of credit provided the students achieve a passing score on the end of course Standards of Learning tests.

In any high school credit-bearing course taken in middle school, a parent may request that the grade be omitted from the student's transcript and the student not earn high school credit for the course. Such request shall be made in the format and by the deadline set forth in regulations developed by the superintendent.

Adopted: October 21, 2002

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78.

8 VAC 20-40-10 et seq.

Cross Ref.: IGBB Programs for Gifted Students

STANDARDS OF LEARNING TESTS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

I. Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests and Verified Units of Credit

In kindergarten through eighth grade, where Standards of Learning (SOL) tests are administered, each student is expected to take the SOL tests. Schools will use the SOL test results in kindergarten through eighth grade as part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students.

Each student in middle and secondary school will take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests. Students who successfully complete the requirements of the course and achieve a passing score on an end-of-course SOL test will be awarded a verified unit of credit in that course. Students may earn verified credits in any courses for which end-of-course SOL tests are available. Middle and secondary schools may consider the student's end-of-course SOL test score in determining the student's final course grade.

Upon recommendation of the superintendent and demonstration of mastery of course content and objectives, qualified students may receive a standard unit of credit and be permitted to sit for the relevant SOL test to earn a verified credit without having to meet the 140-clock-hour requirement. The superintendent by regulation will determine the manner in which a student may demonstrate mastery of course content and objectives, and documentation of such mastery will be maintained in the student's permanent record.

Students may also earn verified credits by taking alternative tests to the SOL assessment. Such tests may only be those approved by the Virginia Board of Education, and the student may earn verified credits only by achieving that score established by the Board of Education.

Participation in SOL testing by students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) will be guided by a school-based committee convened to make such determinations. In kindergarten through eighth grade, LEP students may be granted a one-time exemption from SOL testing in each of the four core areas. Students with disabilities for whom participation in the SOL testing program is deemed inappropriate according to their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan will be expected to demonstrate proficiency on an alternative assessment prescribed by the Board of Education in accordance with federal laws and regulations beginning with the school year 2000-2001.

II. Graduation Requirements

A. Generally

In order to graduate from Buchanan County Public Schools, a student must meet all applicable requirements set forth in the Standards of Accreditation and the Standards of Quality. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma are those in effect when he or she enters ninth grade for the first time.

- The school board will notify the parent of rising eleventh and twelfth grade students of
- (i) the number of standard and verified units of credit required for graduation pursuant to the Standards of Accreditation and
 - (ii) the remaining number of such units of credit the individual student requires for graduation.

B. Types of Diplomas and Certificates

The Buchanan County School Board will award the following types of diplomas and certificates in accordance with state laws and regulations.

1. Standard Diploma

A Standard Diploma will be awarded to students who earn the following standard units of credit¹:

Discipline	Standard units of credit required	Verified units of credit required
English	4	2
Mathematics	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	1
History and Social Sciences	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine or Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Electives ¹	6	
Student Selected Test	_____	_____
Total	22	6

2. Advanced Studies Diploma

An Advanced Studies Diploma will be awarded to students who earn the following standard units of credit²:

¹ The requirements stated in the text apply to students beginning with the ninth grade class of 1998-1999, but the ninth grade classes of 2000-2001, 2001-2002, and 2002-2003 were subject to transitional requirements which required them to earn two verified units of credit in English and four additional verified units of credit of the student's own choosing.

² Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, courses to satisfy this requirement must include at least two sequential electives.

³ The requirements stated in the text apply to students beginning with the ninth grade class of 2000-2001.

Discipline	Standard units of credit required	Verified units of credit required
English	4	2
Mathematics	4	2
Laboratory Science	4	2
History and Social Sciences	4	2
Foreign Language	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine or Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education	1	
Electives	2	
Student Selected Test		<u>1</u>
Total	<u>24</u>	<u>9</u>

3. Modified Standard Diploma

Eligibility and participation in the Modified Standard Diploma program will be determined by the student's IEP team and the student, where appropriate, at any point after the student's eighth grade year. The school in which the student is enrolled must secure the informed written consent of the parent or guardian and the student to choose this diploma program after review of the student's academic history and the full disclosure of the student's options.

Students pursuing the Modified Standard Diploma will pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments prescribed by the Board of Education. In addition, students must earn the following standard units of credit³:

Discipline	Standard units of credit required
English	4
Mathematics	3
Science	2
History and Social Sciences	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Fine or Performing Arts or Career and Technical Education	1
Electives ⁴	<u>6</u>
Total	20

⁴ The requirement stated in the text applies to students beginning with the ninth grade class of 2000-2001.

⁵ Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, courses to satisfy this requirement must include at least two sequential electives.

4. Special Diplomas

A Special Diploma will be awarded to each disabled student who successfully completes the requirements set forth in his/her IEP, but does not meet the requirements for other diplomas.

The school board will notify the parent of students with disabilities who have an IEP and who fail to meet the requirements for graduation of the student's right to a free and appropriate education to age 21, inclusive, pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-213 et seq.

5. Certificates of Program Completion

A Certificate of Program Completion will be awarded to any student who completes a prescribed program of studies defined by the local school board but who is not eligible to receive a standard, advanced studies, modified standard, special, or general achievement diploma.

The school board will notify the parent of students who fail to graduate or who fail to achieve the number of verified units of credit required for graduation as provided in the Standards for Accreditation and who have not reached 20 years of age on or before August 1st of the school year of the right to a free public education. If the student who does not graduate or achieve such verified units of credit is a student for whom English is a second language, the school board will notify the parent of the student's opportunity for a free public education in accordance with Va. Code § 22.1-5.

6. General Educational Development (GED)

a. Generally

The Board of Education has established a program of testing for general educational development (GED) through which persons may earn a high school equivalency certificate or a General Achievement Diploma. The following persons may participate in the testing program:

- persons who are at least 18 years of age⁵ and not enrolled in public school or not otherwise meeting the school attendance requirements set forth in Va. Code § 22.1-254;
- persons 16 years of age or older who have been instructed by their parents in their home pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-254.1 and who have completed such home school instruction;
- persons who have been excused from school attendance pursuant to subsections B and C of Va. Code § 22.1-254;

⁶ Under special circumstances consistent with Va. Code § 22.1-254 and 22.1-254.2, the age limit may be lowered to 16.

- persons for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted pursuant to subsection D of Va. Code § 22.1-254; and
- persons 16 through 18 years of age who are housed in adult correctional facilities and who are actively pursuing a GED certificate but who are not enrolled in an individual student alternative education plan pursuant to subsection D of Va. Code § 22.1-254;
- persons 16 years of age or older who have been expelled from school pursuant to Va. Code §§ 22.1-277.06 through 22.1-277.08; and
- persons required by court order to participate in the testing program.

Under no circumstances will anyone under the age of 16 be eligible for the testing program.

Only those entities designated by the Department of Education as official Virginia GED testing centers will determine whether an individual is eligible to take GED tests. GED tests will be administered only at official Virginia GED testing centers or addendum test sites that have been approved by the Virginia GED Administrator and the GED Testing Service.

Official test scores may be accepted from an approved state agency, an official jurisdiction responsible for overseeing GED testing, or an official GED testing center outside of Virginia.

An individual may take the full battery of tests up to three times during a calendar year. Test scores may be combined in accordance with GED Testing Service policy.

b. General Achievement Diploma

A General Achievement Diploma is intended to provide a diploma option for individuals who leave high school without a diploma. It should not be a first option for high school students. A General Achievement Diploma will be awarded to eligible candidates who satisfy the following requirements.

In order to be eligible for a General Achievement Diploma, an individual must meet one of the following criteria:

- be at least 18 years old and not enrolled in public school;
- not otherwise be subject to Virginia's compulsory school attendance requirements.

In order to be awarded a General Achievement Diploma, candidates must earn a total of twenty standard units of credit including the following:

- four standard units of credit in English;
- three standard units of credit in mathematics;
- two standard units of credit in science;

- two standard units of credit in history and social sciences; and
- nine standard units of credit in electives.⁶

The required standard units of credit may be earned by enrolling in:

- a public school if the candidate meets the age requirements;
- a community college or other institution of higher education;
- an adult high school program; or
- correspondence, distance learning, and online courses.

Candidates for a General Achievement Diploma must participate in GED preparation and must achieve a passing score on the GED examination.

c. General Educational Development (GED) Certificates

GED certificates may be issued to individuals who:

- are at least 18 years of age⁷ and not enrolled in a public or private high school; and
- achieve the minimum passing score requirements set by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education or such higher score requirements that may be established by the Virginia Board of Education.

Adopted: June 26, 2007

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-253.13:3, 22.1-253.13:4, 22.1-254(D), 22.1-254.2.

8 VAC 20-131-10.

8 VAC 20-131-30.

8 VAC 20-131-110.

8 VAC 20-360-10.

8 VAC 20-360-20.

8 VAC 20-680-10.

8 VAC 20-680-20.

Superintendent's Memoranda No. 36 (Mar. 3, 2000) and No. 39 (Feb. 20, 2004).

⁷ The electives taken by a candidate must include at least two sequential electives in an area of concentration or specialization, which may include career and technical education and training.

⁸ Under special circumstances consistent with Va. Code § 22.1-254 and 22.1-254.2, the age limit may be lowered to 16.

LOCALLY AWARDED VERIFIED CREDITS

The Buchanan County School Board shall award verified credits toward a standard diploma in science and history/social sciences to students entering ninth grade for the first time in school year 2000-2001 or thereafter in accordance with this policy.

No student may earn more than four locally awarded verified credits.

To be eligible to earn locally awarded verified credits, a student must:

- enter the ninth grade for the first time in school year 2000-2001 or thereafter;
- pass the high school course and not pass the related Standards of Learning test;
- take the Standards of Learning test at least twice;
- score within a 375-399 scale score range on any administration of the Standards of Learning test; and
- demonstrate achievement in the academic content through the following appeal process.

Appeal Process

The Buchanan County School Board shall appoint a review panel comprised of at least three educators. Different panels may be appointed for individual schools or groups of schools.

The local review panel will review information which provides evidence of the student's achievement of adequate knowledge of the Standards of Learning content. The panel will have discretion in determining the information it will consider. That information may include, but is not limited to, results of classroom assignments, divisionwide exams, course grades, and additional academic assignments (e.g. papers, projects, essays or written questions) as the panel deems appropriate.

Based on the evidence it reviews, the local review panel may:

- award the verified credit;
- deny the verified credit;
- suggest participation in a remedial program and retesting; or
- make additional academic assignments prior to determining whether to award the verified credit.

The decision of the local review panel may be appealed to the school board in accordance with regulations developed by the board.

Adopted: July 19, 2004

Legal Refs.: 8 VAC 20-131-110.B.3.

Guidelines for Local School Boards to Award Verified Credits for the Standard Diploma to Transition Students (attachment to Virginia Department of Education Superintendent's Memo No. 52 (Aug. 9, 2002)), as amended by the Board of Education October 25, 2006.

REMEDATION RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Buchanan County school division supports efforts to provide instructional support to those students who have demonstrated a need for such support by their failure to pass certain SOL assessments. Therefore, the Buchanan County school division will establish a Remediation Recovery Program. Such program will be delineated through regulations promulgated by the Superintendent. Students eligible to participate in such program will include students in kindergarten through eighth grade who have failed the SOL assessment in the areas of English (Reading, Literature, and Research) or mathematics, and students at the high school level who have failed to pass an SOL assessment in mathematics.

Students who retake an SOL must have participated in some form of remediation, including the remediation recovery program, to be eligible for retesting. Also, students who participate in the remediation recovery program are expected to retake the applicable SOL test at the next regularly scheduled administration of the test, and may only be counted in remediation recovery once for one grade/SOL test. At the high school level, students may continue to retake end-of-course tests as many times as necessary to earn verified credit.

Schools shall maintain evidence of a student's participation in a remediation recovery program along with the scores of any SOL tests taken following remediation in the student's record.

The following students are ineligible for the remediation recovery program:

- Students in kindergarten through eighth grade who are retested because they were retained and had not previously passed a grade-level test in English (Reading, Literature, and Research) or mathematics.
- Students who retake an end-of-course test as a result of failing and retaking a mathematics course at the high school level.

Adopted: July 19, 2004

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-253.13:1.

8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

8 VAC 20-131- 30.C.

RETAKE SOL ASSESSMENTS

Eligible students may qualify for an expedited retake of an end-of-course SOL assessment to earn a verified credit where the student meets the criteria established by the Virginia Board of Education.

Under the criteria established by the state Board, the student must:

- Need the test for verified credit; and
- Have passed the course associated with the test, and one of the following:
 - Failed the test by a narrow margin, or
 - Failed the test by any margin and have extenuating circumstances that would warrant retesting, or
 - Did not sit for the regularly scheduled test for legitimate reasons.

For purposes of these criteria, “narrow margin” means a scaled score of 375-399. The division superintendent will be responsible for making the determination of what constitutes “extenuating circumstances” and “legitimate reasons” for purposes of establishing eligibility for an expedited retest of an end-of-course SOL assessment.

Adopted: July 19, 2004

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-253.13:1, 22.1-254(D).

8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

8 VAC 20-131-10 et seq.

TESTING PROGRAMS

A program of standardized testing prescribed by the Virginia Department of Education is administered annually. Standardized tests will be administered according to state and local directives. However, in administering tests or other assessment instruments, school board employees shall not require any public elementary school students being tested to disclose their race or ethnicity on such tests. A school division, however, may obtain such information from a student's permanent record and place the information on the test or assessment.

Adopted: July 28, 2011

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-4.2, 22.1-253.13:3.C.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

The Buchanan County School Board accepts training for effective citizenship as one of the major purposes of education. This can be done by recognizing that many important areas of study involve issues on which differing positions are held by individuals or groups.

In considering such issues, it shall be the purpose of the Buchanan County Schools to allow study of teacher assigned issues as follows:

1. Have free access to all relevant information and materials in the school.
2. Conduct research in an atmosphere of freedom from bias and prejudice.
3. Form and express opinions on assigned issues.

The role of the teacher in the presentation of assigned issues is vitally important. All sides of the issue should be given the students in a dispassionate manner. The goal is for the students to be taught to think clearly on all matters of importance, and to make decisions in the light of all the material that has been presented or can be researched on the issues. Indoctrination is not the intent or purpose of the school division. Although the instructional program of the school division includes many facets of the political party system in the United States, the School Board does not approve as a part of the school program the involvement of students in activities that imply school endorsement of an individual political party or candidate.

Adopted: August 14, 2000

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, § 22.1-78

RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS

In accordance with the mandate of the Constitution of the United States prohibiting the establishment of religion, it is the policy of this School Board that the Buchanan County Schools shall be neutral in matters of religion. This means that the Buchanan County Schools:

- assume no role or responsibility for the religious training of any student; and
- do not become involved in the religious belief, disbelief or doubt of any student.

This requirement of neutrality need not preclude nor hinder the Buchanan County Schools in fulfilling their responsibility to educate students to be tolerant and respectful of religious diversity. The division also recognizes that one of its educational responsibilities is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that religion has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization.

Therefore, the division shall approach religion from an objective, curriculum-related perspective, encouraging all students and staff members to be aware of the diversity of beliefs and respectful of each other's religious and/or non-religious views. In that spirit of respect, students and staff members may be excused from participating in activities that are contrary to their religious beliefs unless there are clear issues of compelling public interest that would prevent it.

The school board may authorize, as an elective in grades nine through 12 with appropriate credits toward graduation, a comparative religion class that focuses on the basic tenets, history, and religious observances and rites of world religions.

Adopted: July 20, 2006

Legal Ref: U.S. Const. amend. I

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-78, [22.1-202.1](#).

STUDENT EVALUATION/GRADING/CLASSRANK/WEIGHTED CLASSES

Alternative educational programs' grades; optional dual enrollment courses' grades (classes that are taken outside of regular school schedule); grades acquired through home-schooling; and/or long-term homebound program grades exceeding one (1) semester (90 days) will not be used to establish class rank. (Waivers for homebound exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Waivers must be requested by the student and/or the parent/guardian during the year in which the course grades are acquired. Waivers will be determined by a committee of high school principals, secondary supervisor or superintendent/superintendent designee. The principal from the requesting school, the secondary supervisor or the superintendent/superintendent designee will be non-voting committee members).

Form that must be submitted to the committee:

- Approved Homebound Form
- Official Transcript
- Current Ranking

Adopted: February 20, 2014