

BOARD BRIEF

Date: October 2, 2020

BOARD INFORMATION: _____

MEETING PREPARATION: X

FROM: Jennifer Abbruzzese, Director of Policy and Board Initiatives

THROUGH: Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Expiration of Time-Limited Policy Provisions for School Year 2019-2020:
[Policy IKFA](#) and [Regulation IKFA-R](#) (Locally-Awarded Verified Credits)

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Goal 1: Systemic Alignment

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Reopening of School

SUMMARY:

The time-limited adjustments to the Locally-Awarded Verified Credit (LAVC) policy and regulations approved by the School Board in June 2020 have now expired and are proposed for deletion via Consent at the October 15, 2020 Board Meeting.

Temporary changes to the LAVC determination process and eligibility requirements reflected the waiver of SOL testing by the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) during spring 2020 and created procedures for locally-awarding verified credits to students as a group. These were in effect for the 2019-2020 school year only.

SY 2019-2020 Expired Changes:

School Review Panels

Based on VBOE's emergency guidelines for the 2019-20 school year, the traditional, divisionwide LAVC review panel was expanded to establish review panels at each ACPS school offering high school credit-bearing courses.

Review Process

Instead of determining LAVC eligibility (at the division level) on a case-by-case basis, school review panels were authorized to determine whether *all* students in a course were provided with instruction in a *majority* of the course standards *and* demonstrated mastery of the standards, competencies, and objectives of the entire course (in lieu of SOLs).

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School review panels then awarded LAVCs to all students in each eligible course with passing grades. (Passing grades for the 2019-20 school year were based upon the average of Quarters 1-3 or Quarters 1-4 in accordance with Policy IKC and Regulation IKC-R.)

(As directed by the VBOE, students with disabilities who are eligible for a Special Permission Locally-Awarded Verified Credit Accommodation (SPLAVC-A) continue to use the IEP/504 process as outlined in Policy IKFA.)

BACKGROUND:

On Friday, March 13, 2020, ACPS closed all schools due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic in order to promote physical distancing and the safety and wellness of school staff, students, and their families. On the same day, Governor Northam ordered all Virginia schools closed for a period of two weeks. On March 23, 2020 the Governor ordered all Virginia schools to remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

On April 2, 2020, the Virginia Board of Education released emergency guidelines requiring school division LAVC policies to address the Superintendent of Public Instruction's waiver of SOL testing requirements for spring 2020. The guidelines provided direction for awarding verified credits to all students in a course with passing grades as a group, instead of making individual determinations on a case-by-case basis.

Upon the release of these guidelines, ACPS convened a cross-disciplinary team of central office and secondary school administrators to consider the state's guidance and develop a proposal for amending ACPS' current LAVC policy for the 2019-2020 school year. The ACPS core team collaborated over multiple weeks to review and refine the proposed adjustments. The proposal continues to be shared with school and administrative staff to obtain additional insight.

For the 2020-2021 school year, SOL testing is again required and the temporary process for locally-awarding verified credits to students as a group is no longer in effect.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the expired provisions of [Policy IKFA](#) and [Regulation IKFA-R](#) that are proposed for deletion.

IMPACT:

Reversion to the standard provisions of Policy IKFA and Regulation IKFA-R aligns ACPS with Virginia Board of Education requirements for school year 2020-2021.

ATTACHMENTS:

Policy IKFA and Regulation IKFA-R ([expired provisions highlighted in blue](#))

CONTACT:

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