

Virginia's High School Graduation Options

Developed by the Virginia Department of Education

Virginia's State Board of Education offers several graduation options, which are named and briefly described below. Graduation and diploma information often changes. To learn the most up-to-date information, please visit [Profile of a Virginia Graduate](#).

ADVANCED STUDIES DIPLOMA

Beginning with students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2018-2019, a student must:

- earn 26 standard and 5 verified credits
- complete an Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course or earn a career and technical education (CTE) credential
- complete a virtual course
- train in emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED)*
- demonstrate the skills in critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship

Beginning with students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2011-2012, a student must:

- earn 26 standard and 9 verified credits
- complete a virtual course
- train in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED*

Eligibility for special education services terminates when a student earns an [Advanced Studies Diploma](#).

*Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

STANDARD DIPLOMA

Beginning with students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2018-2019, a student must:

- earn at least 22 standard and 5 verified credits
- complete an Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course, or earn a CTE credential
- complete a virtual course
- train in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED*
- demonstrate the skills in critical and creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship

Beginning with students entering ninth grade for the first time in 2013-2014, a student must:

- earn at least 22 standard and 6 verified credits
- complete a virtual course
- train in emergency first aid, CPR, and the use of AED*

Eligibility for special education services terminates when a student earns a [Standard Diploma](#).

*Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that documents that they cannot successfully complete this training shall be granted a waiver from this graduation requirement.

APPLIED STUDIES DIPLOMA

The Applied Studies Diploma is a diploma available to students who have a disability and who:

- complete the requirements of their individualized education programs (IEPs) and
- meet other requirements dictated by the Board of Education, but
- do not meet the requirements for another diploma.

Eligibility for special education services terminates when a student completes the requirements of their IEP or turns 22 prior to September 30: [Applied Studies Diploma](#).

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED®) CERTIFICATE

To earn this credential, an assessment that measures a person's attainment of abilities associated with the completion of a high school program of study must be successfully completed. At this time, the State Board of Education has approved the Tests of General Educational Development (GED) as the assessment to fill this requirement: [General Educational Development](#)

GENERAL ACHIEVEMENT ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA (GAAHSD)

This diploma is intended for individuals who are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in public school or who do not meet the compulsory school attendance requirements set forth in the Code of Virginia: [General Achievement Adult High School Diploma](#)

CERTIFICATE OF PROGRAM COMPLETION

This option is available to students who complete prescribed programs of studies defined by a local school board but who do not qualify for diplomas.