
SECTION A: Foundations and Basic Commitments

AA	School Division Legal Status
AC	Nondiscrimination
AD	Educational Philosophy
AE	School Division Goals and Objectives
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AFA	Evaluation of School Board Operational Procedures

SCHOOL DIVISION LEGAL STATUS

The Constitution of the Commonwealth provides that the General Assembly establish a system of free public elementary and secondary schools for all children of school age throughout the state, and seek to ensure that an educational program of high quality is established and continually maintained. The General Assembly requires that such an educational system be maintained and administered by the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, division superintendents and school boards. The Board of Education divides the Commonwealth into school divisions of such geographical area and school-age population as will promote the realization of the standards of quality, and will periodically review the adequacy of existing school divisions for this purpose. The supervision of schools in each school division is vested in a school board selected in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Code of Virginia.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Revised: September 17, 1996; August 21, 2001; April 27, 2004; April 16, 2013

Legal Refs.: Constitution of Virginia, article VIII, sections 1, 5, 7.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-2, 22.1-28, 22.1-71.

Cross Ref.: BB School Board Legal Status
BBAA Board Member Authority

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The school board endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school division and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students.

All citizens of the school division community will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and judgments about the schools to the school administration and to the school board. Residents who are particularly qualified because of interest, training, or experience will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time such persons may be invited by the school board to serve on advisory committees or to assume some other position of service to assist the board in maintaining a high quality of education for its students.

The school board and the administration will give due consideration to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, especially those individuals and groups interested in the schools, especially those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific concerns, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Section 22.1-253.13:7

STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

In compliance with the Standards of Quality for Public Schools in Virginia, which mandate a system of a two-way communication between employees and the board, the board encourages employees to contribute their ideas for the betterment of the school division and to participate in the decision-making process of the West Point Public Schools. Nothing in this policy or regulations promulgated pursuant to this policy shall be construed to limit the authority of the board to make final decisions on all matters of school policy, nor shall they restrict communication between the administration and other employees in administrative and supervisory matters delegated by the board to the Superintendent and staff. This policy and regulations shall not limit opportunities for informal communication nor shall they affect the integrity of the grievance procedure in those incidents to which the formal grievance procedure is applicable.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Section 22.1-253.13:7 (D) (1)

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

The school board recognizes the student body as a significant part of the community and in the decision making process.

Student input is important in the data collection process, and on relevant issues students' views will be sought and considered by the administration and the school board.

Students are encouraged to attend school board meetings.

Adopted: July 22, 1992
Revised: February 16, 1994; August 15, 1995

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, 22.1-78, 22.1-79 (2), 22.1-253-13:6, 22.1-253.13:7 (D)(4).

Virginia Board of Education Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, Part III (3.1-1), VR-270-01-0012, Revised 1992.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The West Point School Board is committed to nondiscrimination with regard to sex, gender, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. This commitment will prevail in all of its policies and practices concerning staff, students, educational programs and services, and individuals and entities with whom the Board does business.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Revised: January 19, 1994; September 17, 1996; April 18, 2000; April 27, 2004; July 16, 2013

Legal Refs.: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681- 1688.

29 U.S.C. § 794.

42 U.S.C §§ 2000d-2000d-7, 2000e – 2000e -17, 2000ff-1.

34 C.F.R. 106.9.

Constitution of Virginia, article I, section 11.

Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3900, 2.2-3901, 2.2-3902.

Cross Refs.: GB/JB Equal Employment Opportunity/Nondiscrimination

GBA/JFHA Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY
SECTION 504

REGULATION

I. REGULATION – 504 HEARING PROCEDURES

A. Issues Giving Rise to a Hearing

A hearing may be requested by any current student or employee over any complaint alleging discrimination based on a disability, including complaints concerning the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of students. If the student is eligible for special education under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, hearings should be conducted in accordance with the requirements of that statute and its implementing regulations.

B. Requesting a Hearing

Requests for hearings shall be made in writing and directed to the Coordinator, Mrs. Juanita Cawley. A hearing must be requested within ninety (90) days of the alleged discriminatory act giving rise to the hearing.

C. Appointment of a Hearing Officer

A hearing officer will be appointed from the list of special education hearing officers maintained by the Supreme Court of Virginia. The hearing officer must be appointed within one week of receipt of a request for a hearing.

II. PRE-HEARING PROCEDURES

A. The hearing officer is responsible for the following matters prior to the hearing:

- (1) Scheduling the hearing date and location and notification to the parties.
- (2) Ascertaining whether the parties will be represented at the hearing.
- (3) Ascertaining whether the hearing will be open or closed.
- (4) Insuring that the hearing is accurately recorded either by recording equipment or by a court reporter.

B. A list of documents and witnesses must be exchanged by the parties one week prior to the hearing and copies provided to the hearing officer.

C. Pre-hearing conferences should be held, if appropriate.

III. HEARING PROCEDURES

A. The parties have the following rights in a hearing:

- (1) to be represented by counsel
- (2) to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses
- (3) to prohibit the introduction of evidence that has not been disclosed in advance
- (4) to obtain a copy of the transcript or a tape recording of the hearing

B. For hearings requested on behalf of students, the student may attend the hearing.

C. The hearing officer shall insure:

- (1) An atmosphere conducive to impartiality and fairness.
- (2) The appointment of a surrogate parent by the school division, if appropriate, pursuant to the regulations adopted by the State pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- (3) Maintenance of an accurate record of the proceedings.
- (4) Issuance of a written decision to all parties setting forth findings of fact and conclusions of law based on the evidence presented in the hearing.
- (5) Issuance of the decision specified in (4) above within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt of the request for a hearing, unless the hearing has been continued beyond that date for good cause at the request of a party.
- (6) Assignment of the burden of proof to the party requesting a change in the status quo.
- (7) That the officer holds all records for thirty (30) days after issuance of a decision. In the event an appeal is noted, the Coordinator will advise the hearing officer of the name and address of the reviewing officer. The hearing officer shall transmit the record to the reviewing officer within three (3) days of the request. In the event no appeal is made, the hearing officer shall return the record to the Coordinator.

IV. REVIEW PROCEDURE

A. An appeal may be noted by an aggrieved party by filing a written notice with the Coordinator within thirty (30) days of the date of the decision issued by the hearing officer.

B. A reviewing officer must be appointed by the Coordinator from the same list from which the initial hearing officer was appointed and within one week of receipt of the request for review.

C. The reviewing officer shall:

- (1) examine the record of the hearing
- (2) seek additional evidence, if necessary
- (3) afford the opportunity for written or oral argument
- (4) advise the parties of the right to be represented by counsel during the review proceedings
- (5) issue a written decision

D. The reviewing officer shall uphold the initial decision unless it is found to be arbitrary or capricious, contrary to law, or not supported by substantial evidence.

E. The reviewing officer's decision must be issued within thirty (30) days of receipt of the request for an appeal, unless the proceedings have been continued beyond that date for good cause at the request of a party. A copy of the decision must be sent to all parties.

F. The record of the administrative hearings shall be sent by the reviewing officer to the Coordinator upon the issuance of the decision.

G. The Coordinator is responsible for maintaining all records of hearings and transmittal to court in the event of judicial proceedings.

STUDENT REGULATION

I. REGULATION 504 IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURE

A. General

The Coordinator or designee is responsible for locating and identifying students with disabilities residing within the school division. In furtherance of this policy the Coordinator or designee shall insure:

- (1) Students with disabilities residing within the school division are located.
 - a. Efforts are to be made annually to locate and identify qualified persons with disabilities residing in the school division who are not receiving a public education presently.
 - b. Notice of the availability of services and the types and location of services should be sent to nearby private schools, pediatricians and the Health Department.

- (2) Parents or guardians of children with disabilities are given notice of their rights.
 - a. Parents or guardians of children with disabilities are notified of their rights at least annually, and, in all cases, prior to evaluation and placement.
 - b. Parents or guardians of children with disabilities are notified of their rights prior to any significant change in placement.
- (3) Appropriate educational opportunities are made available to students with disabilities.
 - a. Each qualified student with disabilities is entitled to a free appropriate public education.
 - b. To the maximum extent appropriate, the student with disabilities shall be educated with nondisabled students.
 - c. Evaluations of the student are to be made prior to providing services.
 - d. Periodic reevaluations are to be made when necessary and, in every case, prior to a significant change in program.
- (4) Hearing procedures are available in the event of a dispute.
 - a. The School Board or parents or guardians may request a hearing over disputes concerning the identification, evaluation or educational placement of persons who because of a disability need, or are believed to need special instruction or related services.
- (5) The identification, evaluation and placement of students eligible for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are carried out in accordance with that statute and its implementing regulations.

B. Identification and Evaluation

1. Those of school age residing in the school division suspected of having a disability shall be referred to the Coordinator or designee.
2. The Coordinator or designee shall see that an evaluation of the student's educational needs is made if it appears that the student might have a disability.

3. Tests utilized for the evaluation process must be properly validated, administered by trained personnel, and assess areas of education needs.
4. The evaluation and identification process must be completed within sixty-five (65) administrative working days of the referral.
5. Following completion of the evaluations, a Section 504 Evaluation Committee shall meet. The Evaluation Committee shall be composed of individuals who represent various evaluation components and others as designated by the Coordinator or designee. Some of the members must be familiar with the student.
6. The parents shall be encouraged to present information relevant to the identification issue for consideration by the Evaluation Committee.
7. The Section 504 Evaluation Committee is responsible for determining the following:
 - a. whether the student has a disability
 - b. the type of disability
 - c. the effect of any disability on the student in the school setting
8. Minutes of the Section 504 Evaluation Committee meeting shall be maintained setting forth the justification for the decision.
9. Parents may be invited, in the decision of the Coordinator or designee, to attend the Section 504 Evaluation Committee meeting.

C. Placement

1. For students who are identified as having a disability by the Section 504 Evaluation Committee, a Section 504 Educational Plan (“Section 504 Plan”) shall be developed to incorporate the services that the student needs in the educational setting.
2. The Section 504 Plan shall be developed with the participation of the parent, a school administrator, and a teacher.
3. If the parent attends the Section 504 Evaluation Committee meeting, the Section 504 Plan may be developed at that time by the Evaluation Committee.
4. The Section 504 Plan must be developed within thirty (30) days of identification of the student by the Section 504 Evaluation Committee.

5. No placement in special services may be made prior to the development of the Section 504 Plan.
6. Changes in placement for identified students with disabilities which result from disciplinary action shall be handled pursuant to the procedures utilized for students identified as having a disability under the IDEA.

Adopted:

Revised: July 20, 1994; September 17, 1996

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

West Point School Board is committed to providing equal opportunity for every student to achieve maximum intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth and to ensuring that each student be equipped to communicate effectively with other people, to be competent both in the work place and in higher education, and to feel confident of the ability to make creative and constructive decisions in his/her life.

West Point School Board:

- provides the necessary trained and dedicated leadership, qualified personnel, equipment and materials to assure an appropriate education for every student;
- treats all members of the school community equitably with the highest degree of respect;
- allocates and uses assets fairly and efficiently

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Revised: March 17, 1993; February 16, 1994; September 17, 1996; April 18, 2000; June 30, 2003; April 27, 2004; July 16, 2013

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

Cross Refs.: AC Nondiscrimination
GA Personnel Policies Goals
GB/JB Equal Employment Opportunity/Nondiscrimination
GBA/JFHA Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation
IGBC Parental Involvement

SCHOOL DIVISION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Generally

The 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 are 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 introduces each student to a variety of interest and subject 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.

The school board will report its compliance with the Standards of Quality to the Board of Education annually. The report of compliance will be submitted to the Board of Education by the chairman of the board and the division superintendent.

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 the extent funding thereof is provided by the General Assembly.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Revised: September 17, 1996; April 27, 2004; July 18, 2005; March 18, 2014

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, section 22.1-253.13:1;22.1-253.13:8..

SCHOOL DIVISION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Section 22.1-253.13:1. Standard 1, Paragraphs C and D

Paragraph C. Local school boards shall develop and implement a program of instruction for grades K through 12 which emphasizes reading, writing, speaking, mathematical concepts and computations, and scientific concepts and processes; essential skills and concepts of citizenship, including knowledge of history, economics, government, foreign languages, international cultures, health, and geography necessary for responsible participation in American society and in the international community; fine arts and practical arts; knowledge and skills needed to qualify for further education and employment or, in the case of some children with disabilities, to qualify for appropriate training; and development of the ability to apply such skills and knowledge in preparation for eventual employment and lifelong learning.

Local school boards shall also develop and implement programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for students who are educationally at risk including, but not limited to, those whose scores are in the bottom national quartile on Virginia State Assessment Program Tests, or who do not pass the literacy test prescribed by the Board of Education. Division superintendents may require such students to take special programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation which may include attendance in public summer school sessions. Based on the number of students attending and the Commonwealth's share of the per pupil costs, additional state funds shall be provided for summer remediation programs as set forth in the appropriation act.

Paragraph D. Local school boards shall also implement the following:

1. Programs in grades K through 3 which emphasize developmentally appropriate learning to enhance success.
2. Programs designed to reduce the number of students who drop out of school. As provided in the appropriation act, state funding, in addition to basic aid, shall be allocated to support programs grounded in sound educational policy to reduce the number of students who drop out of school.
3. Career education programs for all students that promote student awareness and knowledge of careers, and emphasize the consequences of leaving school without marketable skills. School boards may include career exploration opportunities in the middle school grades.
4. Competency-based vocational education programs, which integrate academic outcomes, career guidance and job-seeking skills for all secondary students including those identified as disabled that reflect employment opportunities, labor market needs, applied basic skills, job-seeking skills, and career guidance. Career guidance shall include employment counseling designed to furnish information on available employment opportunities to all students, including those identified as disabled, and placement services for students exiting school. Each school board shall develop and implement a plan to ensure compliance with the provisions of these subsections.

5. Academic and vocational preparation for students who plan to continue their education beyond secondary school or who plan to enter employment.
6. Early identification of students with disabilities and enrollment of such students in appropriate instructional programs consistent with state and federal law.
7. Early identification of gifted students and enrollment of such students in appropriately differentiated instructional programs.
8. Educational alternatives for students whose needs are not met in programs prescribed elsewhere in these standards. Such students shall be counted in average daily membership (ADM) in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Education.
9. Adult education programs for individuals functioning below the high school completion level. Such programs may be conducted by the school board as the primary agency or through a collaborative arrangement between the school board and other agencies.
10. A plan to make achievements for students who are educationally at risk a division-wide priority which shall include procedures for measuring the progress of such students.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The West Point School Board will adopt a divisionwide comprehensive, unified, long-range plan based on data collection, an analysis of the data, and how the data will be utilized to improve classroom instruction and student achievement. The plan will be developed with staff and community involvement and will include, or be consistent with, all other divisionwide plans required by state and federal laws and regulations. The school board shall review the plan biennially and adopt any necessary revisions. Prior to the adoption of the plan or revisions thereto, the School Board will post the plan or revisions on the division's Internet website if practicable and make a hard copy of the plan or revisions available for public inspection and copying and will conduct at least one public hearing to solicit public comment on the plan or revisions.

The divisionwide comprehensive plan will include

- (i) the objectives of the school division, including strategies for improving student achievement, particularly the achievement of educationally at risk students, then maintaining high levels of student achievement;
- (ii) an assessment of the extent to which these objectives are being achieved;
- (iii) a forecast of enrollment changes;
- (iv) a plan for projecting and managing enrollment changes including consideration of the consolidation of schools to provide for a more comprehensive and effective delivery of instructional services to students and economies in school operations;
- (v) an evaluation of the appropriateness of establishing regional programs and services in cooperation with neighboring school divisions;
- (vi) a plan for implementing such regional programs and services when appropriate;
- (vii) a technology plan designed to integrate educational technology into the instructional programs of the school division, including the division's career and technical education programs, consistent with the or as part of comprehensive technology plan for Virginia adopted by the Board of Education; and
- (viii) an assessment of the needs of the school division and evidence of community participation, including parental participation, in the development of the plan;
- (ix) any corrective action plan required pursuant to Va. Code § 22.1-253.13:3; and
- (x) a plan for parent and family involvement to include building successful school and parent partnerships that will be developed with staff and community involvement, including participation by parents.

The School Board will present a report to the public by November 1 of each odd-numbered year on the extent to which the objectives of the division-wide comprehensive plan have been met during the previous two school years.

Each school will prepare a comprehensive, unified, long-range plan, which shall be given consideration by the School Board in the development of the divisionwide comprehensive plan.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Revised: September 17, 1996; April 27, 2004; July 19, 2004; July 18, 2005; July 17, 2007;
March 18, 2014

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, section 22.1-253.13:6.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The School Board reviews its performance annually to ensure its proper discharge of responsibilities to the community. Evaluation is based on a positive approach, identifying the strengths of the School Board and opportunities for improvement.

The following elements are included in the self-evaluation process:

1. School Board members are involved in the development of an evaluation instrument and procedure.
2. The School Board evaluation instrument is completed by individual board members on a confidential basis, and submitted to the School Board Chairman, or the Chairman's designee, for compilation.
3. The School Board meets, with all members present, to review and discuss the composite results.
4. Each conclusion is supported by objective evidence.

Based on discussion of the results, the School Board develops both short and long-range goals and objectives to ensure continued proficiency in its areas of excellence, to strengthen weak areas, and to improve the efficiency of the Board.

Adopted: July 22, 1992

Revised: February 16, 1994; July 20, 1994; September 17, 1996; April 27, 2004; March 18, 2014

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

Cross Refs.: AE School Division Goals and Objectives
AF Comprehensive Plan
BBA School Board Powers and Duties

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**Evaluation of School Board Operational Procedures**

Please assign a value from 1 (do not agree) to 10 (fully agree) after each of the following statements.

PART I. PERSONAL VARIABLES	
Personal written mission/goal statements of board members harmonize with those of the school board.	
Board members give evidence of physical, mental, and emotional capacity for their jobs by attending meetings regularly.	
Board members demonstrate by their voting records and discussions a good concept of their jobs, including long-range vision.	
In meetings, board members demonstrate the freedom and willingness to discuss difficult and controversial issues.	
Board members will abandon strongly held positions when presented with reasoned arguments to the contrary.	
Individual board members refrain from violating confidences of executive sessions to employees, friends, or others.	
Individual board members who find themselves in a conflict of interest position promptly present the matter to the entire board for its advice.	
Individual members take advantage of board in-service activities and then pass on ideas from the sessions to fellow board members.	
Individual board members attend social and ceremonial staff events.	
PART II. ORGANIZATIONAL VARIABLES	
Comprehensive mission and current goals statements for the board are in place.	
Comprehensive mission and current goals statements for the school division are in place.	
Board meetings are conducted with dignity and with reasonable dispatch.	
Board meetings follow a carefully prepared written agenda.	
The board refrains from interfering in administrative matters assigned to the Superintendent.	
The board and the Superintendent maintain a working atmosphere of mutual respect.	
The board creates and maintains a working set of policies and regulations.	
The board insists on a financial recording and reporting system that indicates clearly the financial status of the school system.	
The board works with the Superintendent to build and keep a quality staff.	

The board regularly invites outstanding staff members to be officially recognized and honored.	
The board maintains and uses regular channels of communication directly with staff members and associates.	
The board, in collaboration with the community, develops a long-range plan for construction/renovation, curriculum, services, and revenue.	
The board implements portions of the long-range plan as expeditiously as possible.	
The board annually provides for specific in-service growth – including budgetary provisions – for the board.	
The board provides courteous support and comfortable facilities for the press at board meetings and at other important events.	
The board appoints a sufficient number of standing and ad hoc committees to serve as a policy development resource.	
PART III. OUTSIDE VARIABLES	
The board solicits information about and then discusses school division missions, goals, and results achieved in relation to community needs and preferences.	
The board stays informed on recent laws, court decisions, and administrative regulations affecting the school system.	
The board welcomes the consideration of and takes action on offers of affiliations with other groups as they might affect the welfare of the schools and community.	
The board actively tries to influence legislation and legislators for the benefit of local students and citizens.	
The board works to exemplify the highest standard of conduct in its relations with various religious, ethnic, and racial groups.	
The board studies local social, economic, and demographic changes for clues on how to best serve the community.	
PART IV. OTHER PERSONAL EVALUATION BASED ON OVERALL RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS. (First provide a written statement. Then discuss comments with the evaluator)	
The evaluator's overall rating of this response. (Total possible points = 10)	
SUMMARY AND FINAL REPORT	
Sections	Total points awarded
Ratings on PART I, PERSONAL VARIABLES 9 statements, each with 10 possible points (total = 90)	
Ratings on PART II, ORGANIZATIONAL VARIABLES 16 statements, each with 10 possible points (total = 160)	
Ratings on PART III, OUTSIDE VARIABLES 6 statements, each with 10 possible points (total = 60)	
Total points received on Parts I, II, and III (possible 310)	
Points received on PART IV, SUBJECTIVE EVALUATION	

Evaluator's Recommendations for Improvement: