INSTRUCTION

Graduation Requirements

The Virginia Board of Education sets forth graduation requirements and diploma options for students based upon the year a student enters ninth grade for the first time. In accordance with School Board Policy 662, “Graduation Requirements,” Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) shall follow the rules and regulations stipulated for graduation. Students who satisfy all the requirements specified for their diploma option will be deemed graduates of PWCS and shall be eligible to earn their diploma.

Graduation requirements for each diploma option are found in the General Information section of the PWCS High School Course Catalog. The standard and verified units of credit assigned for each of the course requirements are outlined according to the first year of high school entry and the diploma option.

I. Students Who Earn Credit Prior to Grade Nine

When students below ninth grade successfully complete courses offered for credit in grades nine-12, credit shall be counted toward meeting the standard and verified units of credit required for graduation provided the courses are equivalent in content and academic rigor to those courses offered at the high school level.

II. Advanced Placement, Cambridge, International Baccalaureate, or College Level

Students who complete these courses shall be deemed to have completed the requirements for graduation under these standards, provided they have earned the standard and verified units of credit as required of students earning either a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma.

III. Transfer Students

A. Students who transfer into PWCS from a public school system within the Commonwealth of Virginia must meet all graduation requirements set forth by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). PWCS secondary schools shall accept credits received from other accredited secondary schools. Students who transfer to PWCS from an accredited private or out-of-state school will work with their school counselor to develop an individualized graduation plan that grants some flexibility in meeting graduation requirements as set forth by VDOE.
B. Transfer students must earn the appropriate number of verified units of credit depending on the type of diploma desired and the year the student entered a Virginia high school for the first time. Specific guidelines pertaining to transfer students are outlined in the General Information section of the PWCS High School Course Catalog.

C. Transfer students who enter from non-accredited schools or home instruction are referred to Regulation 715-3, “Admission of Students from Private Schools/Home Instruction By Parents” for information regarding the assignment of credits.

D. Specified courses normally taken at a lower grade level than the one to which the student is currently assigned shall not be required for transfer students provided the student has completed the courses required by the state from which the student transferred at those grade levels.

E. Students transferring above the 10th grade from schools or other education programs that do not require or give credit for health and physical education shall not be required to take or repeat these courses to meet graduation requirements.

F. A student who entered a Virginia public high school in ninth grade, transferred to another state, and returned to a Virginia public high school would meet the verified units of credit requirement for transfer students from non-Virginia public schools.

IV. Locally Awarded Verified Units of Credit

A. Locally awarded verified units of credit may be awarded to students, dependent upon the year the student entered ninth grade and the type of diploma which the student is pursuing.

B. Refer to Regulation 662-4C, “Locally Awarded Verified Units of Credit” for specific details regarding this process.

V. Diploma Seals

A student may earn recognition in the form of Diploma Seals according to the seal achievement guidelines published by VDOE.
The Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability (or designee) is responsible for implementing and monitoring this regulation.

This regulation and related policy shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.