

8VAC20-131-410 RECOGNITIONS AND REWARDS FOR SCHOOL AND DIVISION ACCOUNTABILITY
EXEMPLAR SCHOOL RECOGNITION

8VAC20-131-410.B states:

B. Schools and divisions may be designated and recognized by the board for exemplar performance in accordance with criteria and guidelines it shall establish for top achievement in one or more school quality indicators, and the board may include recognition for high performing schools in specific peer categories, such as schools with high levels of poverty.

Guidance:

These guidelines establish the Board’s criteria to designate schools that have achieved exemplar performance based upon the school quality indicators used for accreditation. Three categories of exemplar performance will be recognized: (1) Highest achievement, (2) Continuous improvement; and (3) Innovative practice.

Highest Achievement:

Eligibility for recognition for highest achievement is limited to schools rated “Accredited” during the most current accreditation cycle. Schools that meet *all* of the following criteria will be recognized for highest achievement:

- School meets state benchmark in reading, math *and* science (75 percent for reading and 70 percent for math and science) based on the current year pass rate on state assessments (not including growth or English Learner progress);
- All student groups within school meet state benchmark in reading *and* math (75 percent for reading and 70 percent for math) based on the current year pass rate on state assessments (not including growth or English Learner progress), *and*
 - For schools with two student groups, there is no more than five percentage points between the lowest performing group and all other students in the school; or
 - For schools with three or more student groups, there is no more than ten percentage points between the lowest performing group and all other students in the school
- School demonstrates current year chronic absenteeism rate of 15 percent or lower.

For schools with a graduating class, two additional criteria apply:

- School demonstrates current year Graduation and Completion Index of 88 points or higher;
- School demonstrates current year dropout rate of six percent or lower.

Continuous Improvement:

Eligibility for recognition for continuous improvement is open to all accreditation-eligible schools that do not receive recognition for high achievement in the same year. Schools rated as

“Accredited” or “Accredited with Conditions” and meet *at least one* of the following criteria will be recognized annually for continuous improvement:

- School demonstrates an increase in the combined rate for math, reading *and* science for each of the past three years, with a total increase across the three years of ten points or more;
- School demonstrates an increase in the combined rate for two or more student groups in reading *and* math for each of the past three years, with a total increase across the three years of ten points or more ;
- School demonstrates a decrease in the chronic absenteeism rate for each of the past three years, with a total reduction across the three years of 15 percent or more of the first year’s chronic absenteeism rate;
- School demonstrates an increase in the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) for each of the past three years, with a total increase across the three years of four percent or more; *and* school demonstrates a decrease in the dropout rate for each of the past three years, with the total reduction across three years of 15 percent or more of the first year’s dropout rate.

Innovative Practice:

Eligibility for recognition for an innovative practice is open to all accreditation-eligible schools, any school division, and any local school board. Schools, divisions, and school boards will be recognized every two years for innovative practices based upon the following criteria:

- School- or division-wide implementation of a new or creative evidence-based alternative to existing instructional or administrative practices in a defined student population
- Practice must be implemented for at least two full academic years
- Goals and objectives for practice must align with one of the following priority areas:
 - Closing achievement gaps among vulnerable and/or minority student groups
 - Developing an integrated STEM approach to learning
 - Building genuine relationships with families to support overall family well-being and children’s healthy development
 - Enhancing technology infrastructure to increase students access to connected devices and the internet
 - Elevating the quality and character of the school environment so that it reflects the positive and support norms, goals, and values of the community
 - Retaining high-quality teachers
 - Developing life-ready students through implementation of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* and the 5 C’s framework (skills in critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship)
- Data provided by school or division demonstrates practice is meeting its objectives and is having a significant impact on outcomes for the targeted student population

Innovative practice recognition will be awarded through an agency-established application process. Schools, divisions, or school boards will self-nominate and submit applications to their

Regional Superintendent designee. Regional Superintendents will review each application and submit a subset of finalists to the Board for consideration. Board members will rate each application received against a rubric and those scoring above a pre-determined range will be recognized.

Schools, divisions, and school boards recognized in any of the three categories of exemplar performance will be listed in the Superintendent's Annual Report and on the Virginia Department of Education website. Other incentives may be provided as resources allow.