

STUDENTS SHOULD PLAN TO ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST DIPLOMA POSSIBLE TO MEET THEIR GOALS.

THE APPLIED STUDIES DIPLOMA:

- Is a recognized diploma by the Virginia Department of Education
- Is not equivalent to a Standard Diploma
- Allows for modifications to curriculum
- Content or tasks may be reduced in depth and complexity
- Does not determine participation in state assessments; participation is determined by the IEP team
- Is available to students with disabilities who complete the requirements of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) and do not meet the requirements for a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma

LIMITATIONS OF AN APPLIED STUDIES DIPLOMA:

- Could be difficult to change to other diploma options once pursued
- May not qualify a student for higher education, federal financial aid, and/or employment

STUDENTS WHO EARN AN APPLIED STUDIES DIPLOMA CAN PURSUE THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

FCPS SECONDARY EDUCATION:

- Students receiving special education services who have not earned a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma are eligible for FCPS programming (Free Appropriate Public Education, FAPE) until the age of 22. Students along with IEP team may consider the students:
 - Remain at their base school
 - Enroll in an 18-22-year program: Secondary Transition to Employment Program (STEP)/Davis or Pulley Career Centers
 - Register for Career and Technical Education (CTE) and/or Academy classes (depending on availability)

HIGHER EDUCATION:

- **Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA):** Students are eligible to attend NOVA with or without a high school diploma. Prior to registering for core academic classes, all students must demonstrate an ability to benefit meaning they are prepared for college-level course work and would need to take the Virginia Placement Test (VPT) or General Education Development (GED). The admissions office can provide additional information. Students who earn an Applied Studies Diploma may not qualify for financial aid. For more information, please contact the college's financial aid office directly.
 - **College Steps:** provides college support for individuals living with social, communication, or learning differences (e.g., significant learning disabilities, autism, developmental, or intellectual disabilities) who are enrolled at NOVA campuses. <https://www.collegesteps.org/>
- **Noncredit College Programs**
 - **George Mason LIFE Program:** is a supportive academic university experience offering a four-year curriculum of study to postsecondary students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. <https://masonlife.gmu.edu/>
 - Additional non-credit college programs can be found at <https://thinkcollege.net/>
- **Adult and Community Education (ACE), FCPS:** Supplies lifelong learning and educational opportunities to the community <https://aceclasses.fcps.edu/default.aspx>
- **Apprenticeships:** An apprenticeship is an employer training program that combines on-the-job training with related instruction <https://www.doli.virginia.gov/apprenticeship/>
- **Job Corps:** Is a program administered by the United States Department of Labor that offers free vocational training and academics to individuals ages 16-24 www.jobcorps.gov
- **Wilson Workforce Rehabilitative Center (WWRC):** Offers vocational training, vocational evaluation, and rehabilitation counseling for individuals with disabilities. <https://www.wwrc.virginia.gov/VocationalServices.htm>

EMPLOYMENT:

- **Competitive Employment**
 - **Workforce Investment Opportunities Act (WIOA) Youth Program:** The WIOA Young Adult Program offers free training, internships, GED prep and high school completion, tutoring, and college and career exploration for young adults ages 17-24 who are out of school and have a barrier to employment. <https://vcwnorthern.com/youth-programs/>
 - **Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS):** This state agency helps individuals with disabilities find and keep employment. <https://www.vadars.org/>
- **Supported Employment**

Adults with disabilities may receive supported employment: Continuous, on-site job coaching, and small group support to in a community setting. Many of the agencies providing supported employment are funded through the **Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board-Developmental Disabilities Services (CSB-DD)**. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board

The Employment and Transition Representative (ETR) in each high school can supply information and resources on the programs and supports listed.