



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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November 1, 2025

The Honorable L. Louise Lucas, Chair
Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee
201 North 9th Street, Room 1404
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Luke E. Torian, Chair
House Appropriations Committee
201 North 9th Street, Room 123
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Ghazala F. Hashmi, Chair
Senate Education and Health Committee
201 North 9th Street, Room 616
Richmond, VA 23219

The Honorable Sam Rasoul, Chair
House Education Committee
201 North 9th Street, Room 910
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Chairs Lucas, Hashmi, Torrian, and Rasoul:

I am pleased to submit the enclosed Report on the annual update to the Revisions to *Standards of Learning* Summative Assessments of Proficiency.

[Chapter 760, Enactment Clause 1, §3 \(2022 Acts of Assembly\)](#) directs the Virginia Department of Education (the Department) to provide updates on the implementation plan for the revised Virginia *Standards of Learning* (SOL) summative assessment of proficiency annually through 2027.

3. That the Department of Education shall submit its initial plan for implementation of revised Virginia Standards of Learning summative assessments of proficiency developed pursuant to § 2 of this act to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations no later than November 1, 2023, and shall provide updates on the implementation of such plan no later than November 1 of each year thereafter through 2027.

If you have questions or require additional information relating to this report, please contact Deputy Superintendent of Student Outcomes and School Quality Tiara Booker-Dwyer at Tiara.booker-dwyer@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Anne Gullickson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Emily Anne Gullickson, M.Ed. J.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

EAG/TBD/mj

c: The Honorable Aimee Rogstad Guidera
Virginia Secretary of Education

UPDATE ON REVISIONS TO THE VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PROFICIENCY HB 585 REPORT

Chapter 760, Enactment Clause 1, § 3 (2022 Acts of Assembly)

November 1, 2025



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter 760, Enactment Clause 1, §3 (2022 Acts of Assembly) required the Secretary of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction to “*convene and consult a work group consisting of representatives of the Virginia Department of Education and other appropriate stakeholders to revise the Virginia Standards of Learning summative assessments of proficiency that require students to demonstrate that they possess the skills, knowledge, and content necessary for success and to develop a plan for implementation of such revised assessments.*”

In March of 2023, the Secretary of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction convened a work group comprised of teachers, Board of Education members, leaders, parents, and state level experts to review the current assessment system, analyze national reports on leading innovative state assessments, participate in discussions with national and state assessment leaders in innovative assessment design, and compare Virginia’s rigor of standards and annual assessment framework to high performing states. The work group met five times from March through September 2023. Outcomes of the work group resulted in five opportunity areas with recommendations to improve Virginia’s assessments. The Virginia Department of Education (the Department) has actively implemented all recommendations.

Table 1 presents opportunity areas and recommendations developed by the work group, along with actions completed by the Department and State Board of Education to actualize the recommendations.

Table 1: Opportunity areas and recommendations for an improved assessment system

Opportunity Areas	Recommendations	Overview of Actions Completed
1. Clearer and more rigorous standards	1a. Review, clarify, and revise Virginia’s Standards of Learning.	State Board of Education approved more rigorous standards. • 2023: History and Social Science Standards of Learning (SOL) approved. • 2023: Mathematics SOL approved. • 2024: English SOL approved.
	1b. Update state assessments to reflect revised Standards of Learning.	2024 – 2025: History and social science, mathematics, and reading SOL test items were revised to fully align with the new, more rigorous standards.
	1c. Ensure cut scores and growth measures signal true proficiency through a transparent, valid standard-setting process and align to nationally recognized assessments.	2025: State Board of Education unanimously approved revised cut scores for mathematics and reading SOL assessments that reflect higher proficiency expectations and align with national benchmarks, ensuring that “proficient” reflects the skills and

Opportunity Areas	Recommendations	Overview of Actions Completed
		knowledge students need to experience success in college, career, and military pathways.
2. More rigorous assessment items	2a. Assessments should go beyond selected response questions.	2024-2025: New test items, including science simulations and performance tasks, were developed and reviewed. Discussions are currently underway on incorporating these items into SOL assessments.
	2b. Maintain rigorous critical thinking expectations while ensuring accessibility for all students.	2024 – 2025: Revised test items for mathematics and reading SOL assessments place an increased emphasis on higher-order thinking and the integration of multiple skills while maintaining accessibility features such as text-to-speech, braille, and large print, etc.
3. More timely, clear, and actionable reporting	3a. Prioritize timely data for teachers and families.	Divisions have access to student assessment results within 24 hours after the administration of computer-adaptive tests. Parents with children in grades 3-8 can access mathematics and reading growth test results and grades 3-12 SOL test results 24 hours after the administration of the computer-adaptive test through the Virginia Assessment Parent Portal .
	3b. Set assessment windows that maximize learning time.	Testing windows are shared with school divisions and posted online. Division leaders are encouraged to select a three-to four-week testing window that minimizes instructional disruption while maximizing learning time.
	3c. Differentiate reports by audience.	2025: New, clearer, and more user-friendly reports are in development and will be released with the spring 2026 SOL assessments for mathematics and reading.
	3d. Support educators through training on using state assessment results to inform	2025: Professional learning experiences, instructional resources, and formative assessment tools, such as Just in Time

Opportunity Areas	Recommendations	Overview of Actions Completed
	instruction.	Mathematics Quick Checks and English SOL virtual modules, were released to strengthen instruction aligned to state standards. Training was also provided on revised Performance Level Descriptors (PLD) in mathematics and reading, as well as School Detail by Question Summary Reports, enabling divisions and schools to use data to identify strengths, address learning gaps, and guide instructional improvement.
4. Improved system coherence	4a. Ensure the assessment system measures proficiency and student growth. 4b. Support divisions in administering high-quality, rigorous interim assessments. 4c. Measure student learning before third grade in both literacy and numeracy. 4d. Provide school division support in developing coherent, aligned assessment calendars to ensure assessment data is actionable.	2025: New proficiency cut scores were approved for mathematics and reading assessments. 2024-2025: School divisions have the option to administer locally identified growth assessments that are aligned to SOLs and approved by the Department. 2024-2025: A new K-3 literacy screener was implemented that aligns with the Science of Reading.
5. Innovative assessment design	5a. Plan for future innovation.	2025: The Secretary and Superintendent of Public Instruction assembled an Innovative Assessment Work Group to provide recommendations that inform the development of a new, innovative statewide assessment system. 2025: The Department released a Request for Proposal (RFP) to procure an innovative assessment consultant to analyze high-quality assessment systems in other states and provide recommendations for Virginia's future statewide assessment system 2025: The Department met with a Technical Advisory Council to review

Opportunity Areas	Recommendations	Overview of Actions Completed
		innovative assessment items, such as science simulations and performance tasks, and discussed incorporating these items into SOL assessments.

The purpose of this report is to provide yearly updates on the implementation of recommendations from the [HB 585 Report](#) as required by the General Assembly.

OPPORTUNITY 1: CLEARER AND MORE RIGOROUS STANDARDS

Standards define the essential knowledge, skills, and learning outcomes expected at each grade level and subject. They form the foundation for curriculum and instructional materials, ensuring consistency in rigor and expectations for what students must know and be able to do to demonstrate proficiency.

The HB 585 Work Group identified five opportunity areas with recommendations to improve Virginia’s assessment system. Opportunity area one focused on developing clearer and more rigorous standards. Recommendations in this area include:

- 1a. Review, clarify, and revise Virginia’s Standards of Learning,
- 1b. Update state assessments to reflect revised Standards of Learning, and
- 1c. Ensure cut scores and growth measures signal true proficiency through a transparent, valid standard-setting process and align to nationally recognized assessments.

Recommendation 1a:

Review, Clarify, and Revise Virginia’s Standards of Learning

Virginia continues to make progress in revising standards, assessment items, and cut scores in alignment with recommendations shared by the work group. *Standards of Learning* (SOLs) provide a strong framework for instructional content that supports academic achievement for all students and prepares them to experience success in college, career, and military pathways.

In accordance with legislation from the 2000 Virginia General Assembly, the Virginia Board of Education (Board) established a seven-year cycle for review of SOLs. Each review process is informed by research and revised with input from parents, teachers, the business community, school administrators, and representatives from higher education. Recent revisions to the standards aimed to provide clarity, increase rigor, and strengthen alignment to college and career expectations. Table 2 provides an example of the increased rigor reflected in the revised SOLs for grade 3 English, reading informational texts. A [full crosswalk](#) comparing the current and previous English SOLs is hyperlinked.

Table 2: Grade 3 ELA example of more rigorous SOLs

Reading Informational Texts (RI)	
Grade Three 2017 <i>Standards of Learning</i>	Grade Three 2024 <i>Standards of Learning</i>
3.6 The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction texts. a) Identify the author’s purpose. b) Use prior and background knowledge as context for new learning. f) Summarize information found in nonfiction texts. g) Identify the main idea. h) Identify supporting details.	3.RI The student will use textual evidence to demonstrate comprehension and build knowledge from grade-level complex informational texts read. 3.RI.1 Key Ideas and Confirming Details A. Determine the main idea of multi-paragraph texts as well as specific paragraphs within them. B. Summarize texts using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause and

Reading Informational Texts (RI)	
Grade Three 2017 <i>Standards of Learning</i>	Grade Three 2024 <i>Standards of Learning</i>
	effect, referring to historical events, scientific ideas, or steps in technical procedures. C. Identify and explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support specific points in texts. 3.RI.2 Craft and Style A. Describe major structural differences between the organizational patterns of different informational texts (e.g., cause/effect, comparison/contrast, problem/solution, description, sequence, and chronological order) and how they support a reader’s understanding of the text. B. Use text features and search tools (e.g., sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate and gain information efficiently. C. Identify the author’s purpose for writing, including what the author wants to answer, explain, or describe. 3.RI.3 Integration of Concepts A. Use prior (experience) and background (content) knowledge as context for new learning. B. Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic. C. Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text. D. Demonstrate comprehension by writing about what is read using the text for support.

The 2023 Mathematics *Standards of Learning* were developed to ensure students build foundational mathematics skills and master critical content as they apply these skills to real-world situations. The mathematics standards are built to embed the five mathematics process goals that support students in becoming mathematical problem solvers, communicating mathematically, reasoning mathematically, making mathematical connections, and using mathematical representations to model and interpret contextual situations. The standards are benchmarked against the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), the ACT, and the SAT, and are therefore among the most challenging mathematics standards in the nation. Successful implementation of these rigorous standards will ensure that every Virginia high school graduate has the mathematical skills, knowledge, and competencies to pursue higher education, to compete in a modern workforce, and to be informed citizens.

Since this work group, the Board approved more rigorous SOLs in history and social science, mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), and computer science.

In the winter of 2025, the Board will consider approval of new standards for [eleven high school science courses](#) (Chemistry II, Astronomy, Anatomy and Physiology, etc.) that can be used to meet science graduation requirements. Table 3 shares a comprehensive list of revised SOLs and the status of Board actions.

Table 3: Revised SOLs and Status of Board Actions

Revised Standards by Content Area	Status of Board Action
History and Social Science	Approved by Board in April 2023
Mathematics	Approved by Board in August 2023
English	Approved by Board in March 2024
Computer Science	Approved by Board in June 2024
Expanded High School Courses in Science	Pending Review by the Board in December 2025

Recommendation 1b:

Update State Assessments to Reflect Revised *Standards of Learning*

The implementation of more rigorous standards necessitated aligning assessment items to reflect the increased expectations for learning. From 2024 to 2025, all mathematics and reading SOL test items were fully aligned to the new, more rigorous standards. This alignment process required both the development of new test items and the realignment of existing test items. For example, a test item previously used on the grade 5 assessment may now appear on the grade 3 test if it more appropriately aligns with the revised standard.

In addition, students are now required to demonstrate higher-order thinking and apply multiple skills to show proficiency. Figure 1 illustrates two example assessment items from the grade 3 SOL test. Under the previous standards, students needed to demonstrate only one skill to meet proficiency expectations. Under the revised standards, students must answer both items correctly, demonstrating the ability to apply multiple skills.

Figure 1: Example grade 3 mathematics SOL test items requiring students to demonstrate the application of multiple skills.

Directions: Drag the answers to the correct boxes.

This set of stars is shaded to represent one whole.



Model R is shaded to represent a number.

Model R

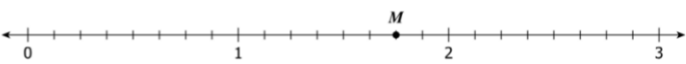


Which fraction and mixed number does Model R represent?

Fraction	Mixed Number
☐	☐
$\frac{10}{12}$	$2\frac{2}{4}$
$\frac{10}{4}$	$2\frac{2}{12}$

Directions: Select the correct answers.

Select the two numbers that identify the location of point *M* on this number line.



$\frac{14}{8}$

$\frac{15}{9}$

$1\frac{6}{8}$

$1\frac{7}{9}$

$2\frac{2}{8}$

History and Social Science Assessment Items Aligned to More Rigorous Standards

Full implementation of the 2023 history and social science SOL will occur during the 2025-2026 school year. New assessment items will be implemented in spring 2026. Test items measuring the 2023 history and social science SOL were field-tested with Virginia students in spring 2025. Resources and support for educators were provided to school divisions in spring 2025. For example, [instructional guides and overview videos](#) were developed to support implementation of standards.

Recommendation 1c.

Ensure Cut Scores and Growth Measures Signal True Proficiency

Cut scores define the minimum score a student must earn to reach a performance level on SOL assessments. In September 2025, the Board unanimously approved revised cut scores that increased the expectations for what students must know and be able to do to demonstrate proficiency.

Prior to Board approval, previous cut scores reflected proficiency levels for mastery of 2016 mathematics and 2017 English standards. Cut scores tied to the old test were insufficient to reflect the higher expectations for student proficiency from the more rigorous academic standards.

Raising expectations with proficiency cut scores is good for Virginia students:

- **Sets a high bar for success:** Raising cut scores ensures that “proficient” reflects the skills and knowledge students need to be ready for success in college, career ready, or in military pathways after high school.
- **Gives families and educators clearer insight:** Raising expectations provides a more accurate picture of where students are, helping parents and teachers better target support and celebrate progress.
- **Prepares students for future opportunities:** Higher expectations equip students with

the skills and knowledge needed to thrive after graduation, including the critical thinking and problem-solving skills to compete and succeed in the real world.

- **Drives excellence in public schools:** When expectations rise, schools excel by improving instruction, implementing effective practices, and leveraging supports, which leads to stronger outcomes for *all* student groups.

By raising cut scores, it also helps Virginia improve its national standing, as our state signals its seriousness about excellence, increases the likelihood of improved performance on assessments such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and makes our schools and students more competitive nationwide. Furthermore, it strengthens state competitiveness. Higher expectations lead to a stronger workforce pipeline, attracting businesses and ensuring our state can compete economically with other states and countries.

Cut scores were developed through the standards-setting process. In February 2025, the Board was briefed on three common standard-setting methods and best practices. The Board of Education chose the standard setting method, Item-Descriptor (ID) Matching (ID Matching). This method “matches” actual test items to a performance level (below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced) based on the extent to which the knowledge and skills required to respond correctly are in the corresponding performance level. ID Matching is widely used and researched, and panelist ‘matching’ tasks are very clear and connected to academic content. This transition was fully supported by Virginia’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), as this is a well-researched practice for establishing cut scores. The rationale includes the following:

1. It meets all the quality characteristics previously reviewed;
2. This method more prominently centers the content represented on the assessment and Virginia’s performance expectations;
3. The panelists’ task is evident and straightforward to implement; and
4. ID Matching is growing rapidly in use among state assessment programs, as is the supporting research base.

In June 2025, 230 Virginia subject matter experts, including teachers, higher education representatives, parents, and business leaders from all 8 Superintendent Regions participated in the standard-setting process to determine cut scores for mathematics and reading SOL assessments. Educators and community members completed online applications. There were three key qualifications for Standard Setting Committee Members: 1) Knowledge of subject matter; 2) Familiarity with student populations such as English Learners, students with disabilities, and/or economically disadvantaged students; and 3) Understanding of consequences of cut scores. Higher priority was given to public school educators with more teaching experience and represented roughly 73% of the total committee membership. In Math, committee members with experience with students with disabilities was 66%, English Learners was 72%, and economically disadvantaged students was 85%. In Reading, committee members with experience with students with disabilities was 87%, English Learners was 79%, and economically disadvantaged students was 92%.

Table 4: Committee members’ level of agreement with statements of various parts of the standard setting process.

Component	Mathematics				Reading			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The judgment steps in Rounds 1-3 were easy to understand and follow.	2%	2%	46%	51%	0%	0%	42%	58%
The feedback data provided after each round helped me to feel more confident in recommending the cut scores.	1%	2%	45%	52%	0%	1%	35%	63%
The group discussion after each round was helpful for understanding the feedback data and other panelists’ perspectives for their cut score decisions.	1%	2%	30%	67%	0%	0%	20%	80%

Table 5. Percentage distribution of committee members who indicated confidence in the Round 3 cut scores.

Performance Level	Mathematics				Reading			
	Not Confident	Somewhat Confident	Confident	Very Confident	Not Confident	Somewhat Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Fail/Basic	3%	13%	53%	31%	0%	16%	38%	46%
Pass/Proficient	6%	19%	42%	32%	2%	19%	37%	42%
Pass/Advanced	1%	10%	49%	40%	3%	5%	38%	54%

Note: For committee members who indicated that they were not confident in the cut scores, they indicated that they were too low in Grade 4 math and EOC and too high in Grade 8 math. Those cuts will be examined before final presentation to the Board in July. Looking at the comments associated with “somewhat confident,” those members wanted assurances that the changes they requested to the PLDs would be made. Recommendations were made to make adjustments to the PLDs to better align with the items they saw. Those are underway.

The Board approved performance level cut scores for reading and mathematics SOL assessments are below in Table 6. The Board adopted performance level cuts. The majority of committee recommendations were maintained, with minor adjustments within the standard error to ensure expectations are raised for all students across all grades and subjects, including advanced and our highest performing students.

Table 6: Board Approved Performance Level Cut Scores

Reading Performance Cut Levels				
	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
Grade 3	0-408	409-443	444-501	502-600
Grade 4	0-414	415-450	451-513	514-600
Grade 5	0-401	402-445	446-509	510-600
Grade 6	0-389	390-448	449-514	515-600
Grade 7	0-375	376-448	449-510	511-600
Grade 8	0-385	386-448	449-517	516-600
End-of-Course Reading	N/A	N/A	479-542	543-600

Math Performance Cut Levels				
Grade 3	0-375	376-442	443-520	521-600
Grade 4	0-383	384-444	445-517	518-600
Grade 5	0-378	379-444	445-510	511-600
Grade 6	0-379	380-432	433-506	507-600
Grade 7	0-387	388-429	430-507	508-600
Grade 8	0-387	388-429	430-502	503-600
Algebra I	N/A	N/A	453-517	518-600
Algebra II	N/A	N/A	443-504	505-600
Geometry	N/A	N/A	452-509	510-600

Increased expectations require strong support and strategic implementation. At the [September Board of Education meeting](#), the following recommendations for implementing new cut scores were shared:

- Implement a multi-year phased approach of no less than four years.
- Add a temporary new indicator “Approaching” to recognize student progress towards proficiency during the multi-year implementation.
- Prioritize support for students in the graduating class of 2026 taking an End-of-Course mathematics or reading SOL by maintaining the current proficiency cut score of 400 for these students.
- Revise student assessment score reports for parents to include score earned, performance level, content mastery, growth areas, and strategies and resources to advance learning.
- Provide targeted professional learning, resources, and guidance to support educators and families in helping students meet new proficiency expectations.

These recommendations are currently being shared with stakeholders to gather input on a phased-in approach to the implementation of revised cut scores and listen to supports needed to help students meet higher expectations.

The Department met with superintendents throughout September at their regional meetings to discuss cut scores and listen to ideas on implementation strategies and support needed to help students meet higher expectations. From September 29 to October 29, 2025, the Department facilitated listening sessions to gather input from stakeholders across the Commonwealth on the cut score implementation plan. Over 1,080 participants, representing school board members, superintendents, principals, central office staff, and parents from all 8 superintendent's regions, attended these sessions. Additionally, over 2,400 Virginians submitted feedback via an online form. Additional listening sessions and the online feedback form will remain open until November 6, 2025. Meeting dates and times, as well as the online form to provide input on the implementation plan, can be found on the [Raising Expectations in Virginia K-12 webpage](#).

In November 2025, a cut score implementation plan informed by research and listening sessions will be shared with the Board for final approval, along with recommendations to revise growth measures.

OPPORTUNITY 2: MORE RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT ITEMS

Rigorous assessment items require students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and problem-solving. These items allow students to engage with complex ideas, support their thinking with evidence, produce informed judgements, and demonstrate critical thinking and understanding through various item types.

The HB 585 Work Group identified opportunity area two as a focus on implementing rigorous assessment items. Recommendations in this area include:

- 2a. Assessments should go beyond selected response questions, and
- 2b. Maintain rigorous critical thinking expectations while ensuring accessibility for all students.

Recommendation 2a:

Assessments Should go Beyond Selected Response Questions

Test items on Virginia's SOL assessments extend beyond selected response questions.

Assessments currently include a wide range of item types such as constructed response, bar graphs, drag and drop, hot spot, fraction models, inline choice, number line, point graph, slider, text entry, hot text, match table grid, and equation editor items.

These test item formats encourage students to think critically about content and demonstrate proficiency beyond traditional multiple-choice responses. New, innovative item types, including function graph, cluster items, shape transformation, solution set, and two-part items, were field tested in spring 2025 and will be included in the operational test item bank in spring 2026.

Examples of item types used in the specific SOL assessments include:

- **Integrated Reading and Writing (IRW):** For grades 5, 8, and End-of-Course (EOC) reading tests, the IRW is a separate, non-adaptive component that asks students to read a nonfiction passage (or passages) based on science or history/social science content, answer related questions, and write a response to a prompt. The item type integrating reading and writing was field tested in spring 2023 and operational in spring 2024.
- **Science:** Items have been developed to embed science instructional practices within content through the use of science item clusters. Each cluster contains three to six questions that are connected to a context-based stimulus. Grades 5 and 8 science and EOC Biology SOLs had science cluster items field tested in spring 2024 and became operational in spring 2025. The Department is also working with its assessment partner to develop science simulations. These simulations allow students to engage in interactive science experiments, analyze data, and report on outcomes.
- **History:** Innovative test item types were field tested in spring 2025 and will be included in the spring 2026 operational test item bank. The history assessment will feature history cluster sets, composed of one to three stimuli, such as primary/secondary source texts, photographs, maps, and data tables/charts, that students analyze to answer three to five related questions or prompts. Additional innovative items for history include multiselect

items and interactive maps for World Geography, World History I and II, Virginia and U.S. History, Virginia Studies, and Civics and Economics.

Recommendation 2b:

Maintain Rigorous Critical Thinking Expectations while Ensuring Accessibility for All Students

Every student deserves the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of rigorous standards on SOL assessments. Virginia's assessments continue to evolve to ensure they uphold high expectations while providing appropriate accommodations for English learners and students with disabilities.

Accessibility features in online assessments are designed to support participation of all students without altering the standards or expectations for student performance. Testing accommodations include read aloud, text-to-speech, assistive technology support for screen readers, braille, American Sign Language (ASL), speech-to-text, word prediction, and pop-up glossaries with translations.

Additional accessibility tools such as screen magnification, magnification aids, and color contrast settings have been incorporated to further support students' access to assessments, along with large print and braille versions of assessments. Approved accommodations are available for students who require them as documented in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, English Learner (EL) Assessment Participation Plan, or documentation for a temporary condition.

The Department will also begin working with its assessment partner and educators to develop additional new test items in alignment with content standards for all subject areas to match the rigor of the standards while covering the breadth of difficulty necessary for test form development. This includes an expanded set of higher difficulty items as requested by the field and recommended by the Technical Advisory Council. Adding additional test items with increased difficulty levels will expand opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of content.

Through these continued enhancements, Virginia remains committed to maintaining rigorous academic standards while ensuring that all students have access to demonstrate their understanding and achieve success.

OPPORTUNITY 3: MORE TIMELY, CLEAR, AND ACTIONABLE REPORTING

Clear, timely, and actionable reporting of student assessment results is essential for quickly identifying and addressing learning gaps. Actionable reporting provides educators with specific, meaningful insights that support differentiated instruction, targeted interventions, and acceleration opportunities. The HB 585 Work Group identified opportunity area three as a focus on enhancing the clarity, timeliness, and usefulness of assessment reporting. Recommendations in this area include:

- 3a. Prioritize timely data for teachers and families,
- 3b. Set assessment windows that maximize learning time,
- 3c. Differentiate reports by audience, and
- 3d. Support educators through training on using state assessment results to inform instruction.

Recommendation 3a:

Prioritize Timely Data for Teachers and Families

Timely access to student assessment outcomes is essential for celebrating learning, informing interventions, and personalizing instruction. Virginia provides test results to school divisions within 24 hours after test administration. Families can access their child's scores and view personalized explanatory videos through the [Virginia Assessment Parent Portal](#).

However, in some divisions, these results are not shared promptly with school leaders, teachers, and families due to internal reporting, policies, or analysis processes. Not all divisions utilize the Virginia Assessment Parent Portal.

As Virginia continues to include more innovative test items such as performance-based tasks and constructed results, turnaround times may be impacted. To address this, the Department is exploring implementing strategies such as artificial intelligence (AI) scoring, supported by human review, to maintain rapid and accurate result delivery.

Recommendation 3b:

Set Assessment Windows that Maximize Learning Time

Administering SOL assessments is a coordinated effort among Department staff, educators, and administrators across the Commonwealth. Test administration [dates are posted online](#), and school divisions are encouraged to select a three- to four-week testing window within the statewide schedule. In preparation for implementation of HB 1957 that was signed into law after the 2025 General Assembly session and is effective July 1, 2026, the Assessment Team is working with school divisions to schedule testing that maximizes instructional time. HB 1957 requires testing to occur for SOL writing and non-writing assessments for students in grades 7-12 in the last two weeks of the school year.

The Department is also working with the assessment vendor to accommodate unique assessment windows for individual students or clusters of students who are ready to demonstrate mastery of

knowledge and skills outside of a traditional semester or annual testing window. With the implementation of HB1477 (2024) and interest by the field to adopt Competency-Based Models and utilize Seat Time Flexibility, especially for middle grades and high school models, the agency is working to accommodate assessment windows that maximize learning time while also ensuring Virginia does not penalize students ready to move forward with more challenging content.

The Department is also providing guidance about retakes. Students who need to retake SOL assessment must be provided support to build their skills and knowledge before retaking the test. The goal of the assessment is to determine whether students fully understand the content and skills defined in the standards. Allowing retakes without intervention may result in students repeating mistakes or guessing different answers. Retaking a SOL assessment can be an integral part of the learning cycle if paired with additional supports for students.

Guidance on assessment administration is provided through Implementation Manuals. The Department will continue to encourage school divisions to select testing periods that minimize disruptions to instruction and maximize learning time, including a focus on retake opportunities after summer programming and additional instructional support. HB 1957 also requires that the frequency of assessment administration for any assessment administered, including any SOL assessment, mandatory local alternative assessment, permissive local alternative assessment, or performance assessment administered as a part of any school board's mandatory local alternative assessment plan, or any combination thereof, for each SOL subject area in a single school year shall not exceed one such assessment per academic quarter, or a total of four assessments per year.

Recommendation 3c: Differentiate Reports by Audience

As Virginia modernizes its assessment system, creating clear and accessible reports for families, teachers, and leaders remains a top priority. Both educators and families must be able to understand what the report communicates to effectively support student learning.

Through the Virginia Assessment Parent Portal, families can access personalized reading and mathematics videos designed to help them interpret their child's score report. These resources are available online in the free, [online parent portal](#) and the Department's [Assessment Student Parent Resources](#) page. Additional materials will be created to support the 3E Readiness Framework, high school pathways, and other opportunities for students aligned with assessment results.

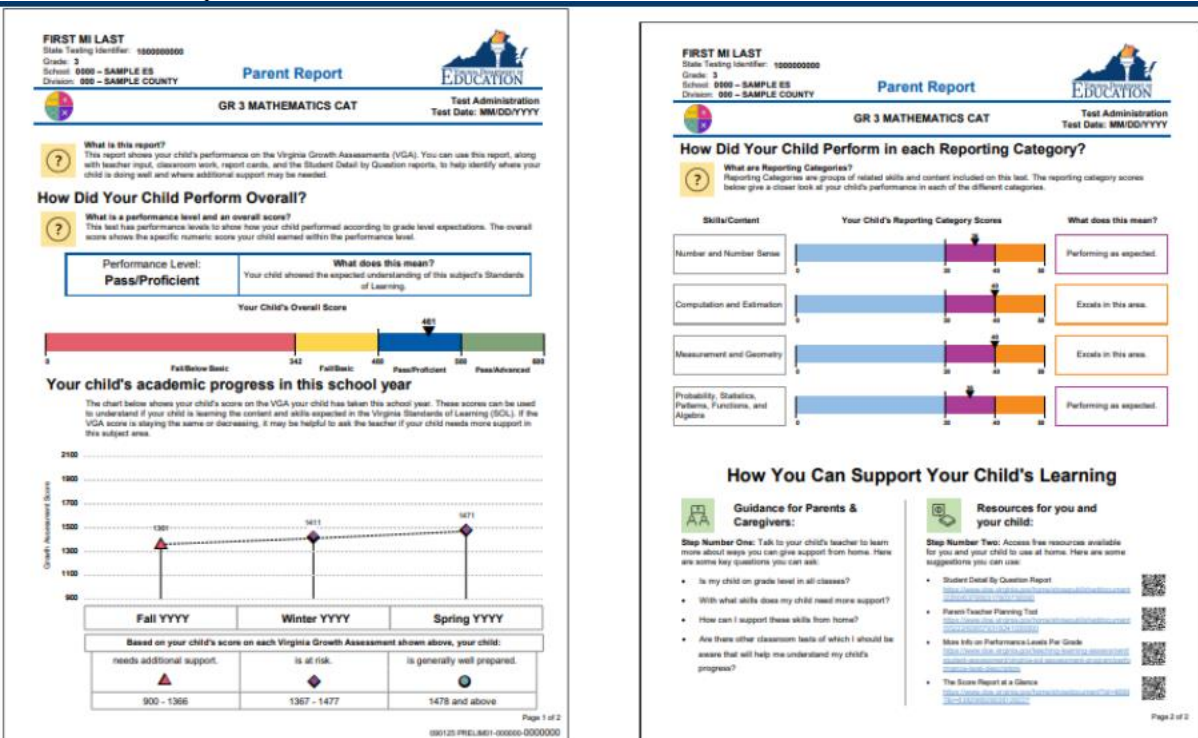
Communication to teachers and families about how their students are progressing is of utmost importance. Teachers need timely, actionable data to guide instruction, while families need transparent information about areas of strength and growth to help their child stay on track.

To develop parent-friendly reports, the Department partnered with Learning Heroes, a national organization dedicated to strengthening parent-school communication. Through focus groups, Learning Heroes reviewed existing parent reports and Student Detailed Question Report (SDBQ). Several recommendations were provided to improve reporting, including:

- Use of clear, simplified language,
- Revise formatting so that reports are easier to navigate,
- Consistent color coding and labeling for clarity, and
- Inclusion of additional resources to support learning at home.

The Department presented a draft parent report to the Board in October 2025 and is conducting additional focus groups in November 2025 to inform improvements that makes the report more accessible and valuable to parents. The new parent reports for mathematics and reading SOL assessments, to be released in spring 2026, will provide a clearer, more supportive picture of student performance. Reports will display student scores and performance levels in reading and mathematics under both current and revised cut scores. They will also include detailed insights into specific content areas and skills where the student demonstrated a strong understanding and where additional supports may be needed. Figure 2 displays the current parent report and a draft of the revised parent report from the October Board meeting.

Figure 2: Current parent report and a draft of the revised parent report
Current Parent Report



Draft One - Revised Parent Report (October 2025)

Page 2 – Performance Details

FIRSTNAME M. LASTNAME
 20th Training Identifier: 2254267890
 Grade 5
 School: 0000 - NICHOLS MIDDLE
 Division: 0000 - BRIDGEVIEW NAME

Parent Report Draft

Grade 5 Math <Test Name>

Spring 2025
 Test Date: XX/XX/2025

What is this report?

This report shows your child's performance on the Virginia Standards of Learning test. It provides your child's overall score and performance level. The overall score shows the specific number, score your child earned. Performance levels show how your child performed according to grade level expectations. For information about how to support your child, visit [FamilySupporter.org/SLAS](#)

How did your child perform based on current expectations?

Overall Score 430	Performance Level Pass/Proficient	What does this mean? Your child showed the expected understanding of the math standards of learning for your grade level.
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How did your child perform based on future expectations?

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, new performance levels scales will be introduced to reflect higher expectations that align with national benchmarks and Virginia's more rigorous standards. A new performance level of "approaching" is included, which means your child is making progress towards fully understanding math standards. The chart below shows the performance your child compares your child's current performance level to what it would have been if next year's performance levels were applied to this year's score.

Your Child's Performance Level Based on Current Performance Expectations

334 400 430 460

Proficient/Exceeds Proficient Approaching Proficient/Exceeds Exceeds

Your Child's Performance Level Based on Future Performance Expectations

379 411 430 441 461 481

Proficient/Exceeds Approaching Proficient/Exceeds Exceeds

Performance Under Revised Cut Score

How Did Your Child Perform on each Reporting Category?

Reporting categories are groups of skills and content related to the test. Having a range of scores across categories, which are on a scale of 0-50, give a clearer look at your child's performance across the different categories.

Number and Number Sense

23

Computation and Estimation

32

Measurement and Geometry

45

Needs Additional Support

Strong Understanding

[illegible]

Recommendation 3d.

Support Educators through Training on Using State Assessment Results to Inform Instruction

State standards define what students are expected to learn, and state assessments measure the extent to which students meet those expectations. The Department takes a comprehensive and proactive approach to supporting educators in using assessment results to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.

Proactively Building Capacity to Effectively Implement Standards

The Department works collaboratively with educators across the Commonwealth to develop and provide high-quality instructional resources and professional learning experiences. These supports are designed to help educators effectively implement state standards in daily classroom practice and to use assessment information to guide instruction before, during, and after testing.

For example, the Department has released [Just in Time Mathematics Quick Checks](#), formative assessments aligned to the 2023 Mathematics SOLs. These tools help teachers identify student learning gaps and plan targeted instruction to address them as new content is introduced throughout the school year. Teachers can also use Quick Checks to identify and diagnose learning gaps at grade level and/or to assess understanding of prerequisite knowledge that may be needed to access grade level content.

To support implementation of English SOLs, the Department has developed and released a [comprehensive suite of on-demand virtual resources](#). These include sessions on *Developing Skilled Readers and Building Reading Stamina*, *Using Data to Support Foundations for Reading and Foundation for Writing Instruction*, *Text Dependent Questions*, and host of other topics informed by teacher needs and assessment outcomes. These proactive resources support preparing educators to meet student needs before SOL assessments are administered.

Building Capacity for Test Readiness

The Department, in collaboration with educators, developed [performance level descriptors](#) (PLDs) for SOL assessments that describe the knowledge and skills associated with each performance level (basic, proficient, advanced, etc.) on SOL assessments. PLDs help teachers, students, and parents understand the expectations for performance and provide insight into the type of student performance required for each achievement level.

The Department also releases [practice test items](#) organized by grade level and subject. These items mirror the types of questions and technology-enhanced items students encounter on SOL assessments, helping both teachers and students become familiar with the testing platform, tools, and content expectations.

Building Capacity to Use Assessment Results to Inform Instruction

Beyond proactive support, the Department also provides training and tools to help educators respond effectively to assessment results. Each school division and school has access to a School Detail by Question Summary Report, which provides a detailed look into student performance by content area and test item. The Department provides training on how to access and read these reports so that division leaders can identify areas of growth and strength within their curriculum and instruction. In Fall 2025, the Department will begin using the School and Division Detail by Question Summary Report to customize support for specific schools and divisions, further strengthening the connection between assessment data and instructional improvement.

OPPORTUNITY 4: IMPROVE SYSTEM COHERENCE

Virginia administers a comprehensive system of assessments designed to measure student learning, growth, and readiness for future success. The statewide assessment system currently includes SOL tests, the Virginia Growth Assessment (VGA), and the Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS) for grades K-3. Virginia also participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and students may take additional assessments connected to specific programs such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, dual enrollment, and industry credential assessments within Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. In addition, school divisions administer locally selected assessments to monitor student progress.

A clear, coherent system of assessment strengthens alignment among standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, while improving efficiency by reducing redundancies and ensuring that time and resources are focused on the shared educational goals defined by state standards.

The HB 585 Work Group identified opportunity area four as a focus on improving system coherence. Recommendations in this area include:

- 4a. Ensure the assessment system measures proficiency and student growth,
- 4b. Support divisions in administering high-quality, rigorous interim assessments,
- 4c. Measure student learning before third grade in both literacy and numeracy, and

- 4d. Provide school division support in developing coherent, aligned assessment calendars to ensure assessment data is actionable.

Recommendation 4a:

Ensure the Assessment System Measures Proficiency and Student Growth

To advance recommendation 4a, the Department has taken steps to ensure the assessment system measures proficiency and student growth. Key steps include:

- Revising standards in mathematics and English to increase the rigor and raise expectations of what students are required to know and do.
- Aligning all test items to the more rigorous standards.
- Revising cut scores to reflect higher proficiency expectations for mastery of the more rigorous mathematics and English standards and strengthening alignment of proficiency expectations to national benchmarks.

These efforts collectively ensure that “proficient” reflects the skills and knowledge students need to be ready for success in college, career, or military pathways.

Understanding both student growth throughout the school year and proficiency at the end of the school year provides essential information for both educators and families. In accordance with Subsection C of § 22.1-253.13:3 of the *Code of Virginia*, the State Board of Education permits local school boards to administer assessments as alternatives to the through-year growth assessment system, during the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, provided these alternatives align with SOLs and are approved by the Department. This flexibility allows divisions to choose appropriate assessments in reading and mathematics that support local needs while maintaining statewide coherence and alignment across the assessment system.

Recommendation 4b:

Support Divisions in Administering High-quality, Rigorous Interim Assessments

The Department recognizes the importance of providing school divisions with access to high-quality interim assessments aligned to SOLs to ensure that instructional decisions are informed by timely, actionable data. Divisions currently have access to the Virginia Growth Assessment and can access this data to inform instruction within 24 hours after test administration. The Department will continue to explore additional options for interim assessments that support providing data to inform instructional improvement. This topic will be a focus of the Innovative Assessment Work Group and will be considered in the development of any future statewide assessment system procurements.

Recommendation 4c:

Measure Student Learning Before Third Grade in both Literacy and Numeracy

Virginia’s key three early childhood and early elementary data collection initiatives include LinkB5, the Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS), and VKRP. These initiatives are central to understanding and supporting young learners.

As Virginia was one of the first states 30 years ago implement a universal K-3 literacy screener. In 2024-2025, Virginia transitioned to a new, comprehensive literacy screener aligned with science-based reading research created by the University of Virginia for students in preK-grade 3 called the [Virginia Language and Literacy Screening System](#) (VALLSS). VALLSS Grade 4-8 was piloted in 2024-2025 with a group of Virginia schools. It will be fully implemented in 2025-2026 with students who meet the determined criteria. VALLSS assesses Alphabet Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Decoding, Encoding, Language: Passage Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN). VALLSS collects literacy data 3 times a year for up to 315,000 children in 23,500 preK-grade 3.

The [Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program](#) (VKRP) collects mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health data two times a year for over 130,000 children in 8,000 classrooms for pre-K3, Pre-K4, and K.

In 2022, the Department provided funding through the federal Preschool Development Grant Funds and American Rescue Plan Act to a team of researchers within UVA's School of Education and Human Development (EHD) to develop and implement a coordinated and integrated technology strategy and shared infrastructure between the growing state data collection initiatives (LinkB5, VALLSS, VKRP) to maximize the impact and potential of these data systems. The integrated data system, Virginia Connects for Kids (VAConnects), ensures that each project can not only sustain individual growth and expansion, but also work together to prioritize the integrity and continuity of data needed to inform and strengthen Virginia's sizeable investment in learners—birth through eighth grade.

The goals of the integrated data system are to build a robust, coordinated system with enhanced hosting infrastructure and security features; shared data warehousing reflecting effective data governance; consistent, aligned, and integrated reporting; and a more streamlined user interface.

In 2024–2025, the VAConnects team worked in partnership with the Department to continue establishing security infrastructure, developing and implementing a Data Governance Framework, improving the user interface and reporting services, and launched statewide for VALLSS: K-3 users for data entry and reporting. VAConnects fully launched in August of 2025, with more than 80,000 users expected to log in Fall 2025.

VAConnects links early childhood classroom and site quality, elementary school, and middle school data to improve student outcomes for thousands of children in the Commonwealth. These complex datasets will enable stakeholders across Virginia to clearly understand the impact of investments in early childhood on school readiness, literacy, mathematics, social-emotional learning, and other academic outcomes. In addition to connecting data for each child across initiatives like [VQB5](#), VKRP, and VALLSS, VAConnects will also link data for individual children across years. For the first time, Virginia will have access to a single continuum of data encompassing children's birth-to-five and K-12 experiences, while still protecting student privacy and prioritizing security.

The Department will continue to support and expand options to measure student learning in both literacy and numeracy before grade 3 specifically via Virginia Connects for Kids (VAConnects).

Recommendation 4d:

Provide School Divisions Support in Developing a Coherent, Aligned Assessment Calendar to Ensure Assessment Data is Actionable

The Department provides a state assessment calendar with flexible windows for administering assessments throughout the year. School divisions use this calendar when setting their own assessment calendars. Through regularly scheduled training, the Department's Assessment Team provides information on policies on test administration, test security, monitoring, and using the vendor assessment platform.

The Assessment Team is enhancing its training on data entry and verification prior to, during, and after test administration to include clear guidance on the submission for Authorization to Report. This training will emphasize the importance of correct data entry in various areas, including student demographic information, a process for review, and the certification of the results. Subsequent requests to make changes after the data is submitted will require clear documentation and specifics on the number of test records impacted, rationale for the change, corrective action plan to mitigate future errors, and verification from the division superintendent.

These trainings emphasize the importance of developing an instructional sequence to ensure students are prepared for the assessment, and if they are eligible for an expedited retake, then they have sufficient time for targeted support to address instructional weaknesses based on individualized information from reports in the assessment system, such as the Student Detail by Question Report. The Assessment Team demonstrates how school divisions can use these reports to support student learning and communicate with families. While school divisions have flexibility on when and how they provide families and students with reports on student performance, the Assessment Team illustrates the importance of careful planning before, during, and after test administration, so that results can be reported in a timely manner for data analysis, evaluation, and instructional planning for students, schools, and the division.

The Department will also support school divisions in implementing data cycles to inform instruction. This includes regularly collecting and analyzing formative and summative assessment data to inform instruction that leads to improved student outcomes.

OPPORTUNITY 5:

INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT DESIGN

Virginia continues to modernize its assessment system to reflect best practices while maintaining rigorous expectations for all students. The HB 585 Work Group emphasized expanding opportunities to evaluate student mastery and competency through a more integrated and innovative approach, one that allows students to demonstrate learning in multiple ways and advance as they master content. This includes performance-based assessments that reflect real-world scenarios.

These assessments will leverage technology and AI to enhance accessibility, accelerate scoring of constructed response items, and reduce costs while maintaining quality. Additionally, the work group encouraged the use of a course-embedded, high-stakes final assessment that

contributes to a student’s final grade. The Department is actively exploring each of these ideas to inform the next generation to state assessments. Effective July 1, 2025, HB 1957 requires that SOL and local alternative assessment scores for students in grades 7-12 must count for 10% of the student’s overall course grade.

The HB 585 Work Group identified opportunity area five as a focus on innovative assessment design. The one recommendation for this area includes:

Recommendation 5a:

Plan for Future Innovation

[Item 119.A.3.b.](#) requires the Department and Secretary of Education to establish an Innovative Assessment Work Group consisting of representatives from organizations that include superintendents, teachers, principals, curriculum development and assessment specialists, and experts in statewide assessment implementation. This Work Group is charged with providing critical input to inform the development of a new, innovative statewide assessment system.

In September 2025, invitations were extended to organizations that represent superintendents, principals, teachers, school boards, and higher education to nominate individuals to the Innovative Assessment Work Group. Nominations were also received from the Superintendent and Secretary. The individuals listed in table 7 were selected to participate in the work group based on nominations.

Table 7: Innovative Assessment Work Group Members

Organization	Name
Founder of Read Not Guess	Mr. Chad Aldeman
Founder of EduTutor VA	Ms. Kristen Amundson
Virginia School Boards Association	Mr. Douglas Brown
Augusta County Public Schools	Ms. Wendy Chandler
Collaborative for Student Success	Mr. Jim Cowen
Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals	Ms. Victoria Gilbert
ExcelinEd	Ms. Christy Hovanetz
Comprehensive Instructional Program	Mr. Matt Hurt
All4Ed	Ms. Anne Hyslop
Virginia Community Colleges	Ms. Paula Mooradian
School Board Member Alliance	Ms. Shelly Norden
Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children member/Virgina K-12 Parent	Ms. Tian Olsen
Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals	Dr. Melanie M. Patterson
Former State Board of Education Member; Roanoke City Public Schools	Dr. Alan Seibert
Virginia Association of School Superintendents	Dr. Kristy Somerville-Midgett
Virginia Education Association	Mr. Chad Stewart
Virginia K-12 Parent	Mr. Todd Truitt

Organization	Name
Virginia Teacher of the Year (Region 5) and Adapted Special Education Teacher at Jefferson Forest High School Bedford	Ms. Genevieve Kathryn Weaver

The Innovative Assessment Work Group had a kickoff meeting on October 30, 2025. At this meeting, participants reviewed the purpose and goals of the Work Group, examined the current status of the assessment system and progress made on HB 585, reviewed and provided input on sample innovative assessment items, and discussed next steps. Additional meetings are scheduled for November 6, November 20, and December 4, 2025. The Work Group will produce an initial set of recommendations by January 2026.

Innovative assessments are also informed by input from the Department’s Technical Advisory Council (TAC). The TAC is an advisory board of national experts and respected psychometricians with in-depth knowledge of effective practices for large-scale assessments. TAC members provide guidance on assessment design, development, and implementation; standard setting and cut scores; growth models; test item banks; innovative assessment items; and test security. TAC Members are listed in Table 8.

Table 8: Virginia’s Technical Advisory Council

Experience	Name
National Assessment Governing Board and Professor Emeritus for the University of Pittsburgh	Dr. Suzanne Lane
Former Chief Research Scientist at the College Board	Dr. Denny Way
Former Assistant Commissioner for the Florida Department of Education	Mr. Vincent Verges
Nation Expert in Multilingual Learners and a Virginia Public School Parent	Dr. Molly Faulkner-Bond

On October 2-3, 2025, TAC members, Department staff, and the state’s assessment vendor convened to discuss Virginia’s assessment system. The group reviewed innovative test items, including science simulations and performance tasks, and engaged in thoughtful discussion on strategies to incorporate these items into future assessments. These items are included as part of the contract renewal with our assessment vendor.

Item 119.A.3.a. of the budget included \$500,000 in fiscal year 2025 to procure a vendor to analyze options for implementing a new statewide assessment system. This appropriation failed to include language authorizing mandatory carry-forward of the funds from Fiscal Year 2025 to Fiscal Year 2026. With the timing of the approved funding coinciding with the end of the Fiscal Year (June 30, 2025), there was insufficient time to develop, issue, and award a quality RFP for the assessment consultant as outlined in the Appropriation Act. In a typical fiscal year, any discretionary carryover request requires the Governor’s approval (Item 4-1.05.a., Chapter 725), with approval typically occurring annually in the fall. The Department was proactive and requested an expedited review of the carryover request specific to this allocation of funding so

we could move forward with the issuance of an RFP for an assessment consultant due to the time horizon for an effective analysis and informed decisions/recommendations for next steps. The expedited carryover request was approved by the Governor on August 25, 2025. To ensure compliance with procurement policies and procedures, the Department had to ensure that the carryover request was approved, and carryover funding was allotted prior to posting an RFP and approved funding/appropriation was available to support the awarding of a contract to an assessment consultant.

The Department issued the RFP on October 6, 2025. In accordance with [Item 119.A.3.c.](#), the statement of needs outlines the guiding principles in researching and developing an innovative assessment system aligned to the rigorous *Virginia Standards of Learning* that meets the needs of diverse learners and provides detailed, user-friendly information for educators and families. The statement of needs included:

1. An analysis of high-quality assessment systems in other states, emphasizing models that incorporate:
 - a. alignment with state standards and instructional goals;
 - b. non-traditional assessments, such as project-based, competency-based, personalized-learning, and performance-based approaches;
 - c. accessibility for English learners and students with disabilities, with examples of accommodations and multilingual assessments from other states;
 - d. advanced technology integration, such as adaptive testing and online platforms, including infrastructure requirements and associated costs;
 - e. integration of authentic growth measures that provide actionable, formative feedback for educators and could be integrated into a statewide assessment system;
 - f. feedback on the application of knowledge and higher-level reasoning skills as described in the standards;
 - g. best practices for release of rubrics, sample items and tasks, performance level descriptors, item maps, anchor papers, exemplars, and other resources that clarify the benchmarks for success;
 - h. recommendations for innovative, reliable, and valid scoring practices that support data cleaning, validation, and timely reporting of assessment outcomes;
 - i. best practices for sharing and reporting assessment outcomes to students, parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents in a timeframe that can inform instructional improvement; and
 - j. best practices for sharing and reporting assessment outcomes to the state education agency in a timeframe that can inform support to school divisions.
2. A detailed project plan of the work planned and completed by the contractor.

From October 6 through October 27, 2025, an RFP was posted to secure an innovative assessment consultant in alignment with requirements outlined in [Item 119.A.3.c.](#) The purpose of RFP was to solicit sealed proposals to establish a contract through competitive negotiation with a consultant to analyze options for implementing an innovative statewide assessment system that supports high-quality teaching and learning in Virginia public schools. The new assessment

system will align with Virginia's *Standards of Learning*, be implemented in the 2027-2028 school year, and reflect best practices in assessment design, accessibility, and instructional alignment. The selected vendor will be a consultant or organization that has demonstrated expertise in K-12 statewide assessment systems and developing comprehensive reports with recommendations for state education agencies.

On October 16, 2025, an optional preproposal conference was held with prospective vendors. The purpose of the conference was to allow potential offerors an opportunity to present questions and obtain clarification relative to any facet of the solicitation. There were 16 participants representing 14 different organizations at the preproposal conference. Questions submitted along with answers provided are shared below.

1. What is the anticipated start and end date for this scope of work?
November 2025 – March 2026. The assessment vendor is required to develop and submit a final comprehensive report that will be shared as part of the monthly submission updates. This will be available to General Assembly members prior to the 2026 legislative session.

Additional time was included to account for unanticipated events.

2. What is the budget maximum or budget range for this scope of work?
The budgeted amount is \$500,000. Please keep in mind that this is a competitive solicitation and the price is part of the evaluation factor.
3. With whom should the vendor plan to engage during this work, for what purposes (e.g., VDOE staff, working groups, legislature, other stakeholders)?

The vendor will work directly with the point of contact for the Department. The selected vendor will also present to the Innovative Assessment Work Group.

4. It is noted in the RFP that funding for this work was appropriated through Virginia's budget ([Item 119 A.3.a](#)). Section A3 of Item 119 also mentions a work group (A.3.b) as well as a final report due on November 1, 2025 (A.3.d). What is the scope of the work group's report?

The report will share recommendations from the Work Group members. This will be available to General Assembly members ahead of the legislative session, as requested.

5. The last paragraph on page 3 of the RFP discusses the vendor for this project as well as the future respondent/vendor for the Virginia Assessment Program. It includes the sentence, "VDOE owns existing test items that must be imported into the respondent's system." Can VDOE confirm that the respondent for RFP - 201-26-028 does not need to be able to import VDOE items?

We are confirming that the respondent to this RFP does not need to import VDOE items.

The Department received five responses to the RFP and anticipate awarding the contract by November 15, 2025. The Department will immediately support the assessment contractor in gathering background information and engaging with the Innovative Assessment Work Group.

To support monthly updates to the Chairs and staff of the Senate Finance and Appropriations,

Senate Education and Health, House Appropriations, and House Education Committees, the assessment contractor will provide reports to the Department that include:

1. Accomplishments achieved during the reporting period;
2. Tasks completed pursuant to the provisions of the contract and the completion dates of such tasks; and
3. Projected completion dates for the remaining specific tasks required by the contract.

The assessment vendor is required to develop and submit a final comprehensive report that will be shared as part of the monthly submission updates. This will be available to General Assembly members prior to the 2026 legislative session.

NEXT STEPS

The Department continues to prioritize the implementation of recommendations from the HB 585 Work Group. Efforts continue to review and refine SOLs, evaluate and update assessment items for alignment to SOLs, and develop more rigorous and innovative assessment items. In collaboration with national experts and stakeholders, the Department is enhancing parent, school, and division assessment reports to ensure clarity, timeliness, and usefulness to inform instruction. Stakeholder input and research-based practices remain central to improving system coherence and guiding the development of a forward-looking, innovative assessment system. This report reflects the Department's continued dedication to ensuring strong alignment among rigorous standards and innovative assessment while upholding high expectations for all students, preparing them to experience success in college, career, and military pathways.