

## **Board of Education Review and Revision of the Standards of Accreditation Graduation Requirements**

### **The Board of Education Retreat on October 22, 2014**

The purpose of the retreat was to:

- (1) Understand the history and context of Virginia's accreditation and accountability system
- (2) Examine accreditation from a national perspective
- (3) Begin discussions about Virginia's accreditation system moving forward
- (4) Consider ideas for accreditation, such as growth measures other than student outcomes, and whether accreditation needs to be on an annual basis.

The following issues were included in the discussions:

- The need for remediation in mathematics in college
- The development of college and career-ready expectations
- The rationale for moving away from clock-hours for credit
- The meaning of college and career-ready
- Pathways to college
- The necessary number of verified credits for an Advanced Studies diploma
- A look at accreditation in the future
- The incorporation of student-growth measures into the accreditation system

Board members considered what issues they would like to explore further.

### **The Board of Education Meeting of November 20, 2014**

Discussion took place regarding the comprehensive review and revisions to the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, or Standards of Accreditation (SOA)

- The Board approved the proposed stage of the SOA on October 24, 2013, and that action had been undergoing executive review.
- The 2014 General Assembly approved legislation related to accountability and accreditation, and to create the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee, charged with providing the Board and General Assembly with recommendations.
- The General Assembly approved legislation to eliminate five Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments, moving toward local alternative assessments, and modify the A-F grading system. The Standards of Learning Innovation Committee's topics of focus included incorporating growth in accreditation,

acknowledging progress in closing achievement gaps, creating additional gradations of accreditation, providing multiple-year accreditation designs, and increasing flexibility for high-performing schools.

- Given the multiple factors influencing the Board’s revisions to the state accreditation system, and the Board’s expressed intent to conduct a comprehensive review and consideration of revisions to the SOA, the Board withdrew the proposed stage of the SOA. The Board indicated that it intended to propose amendments at a future date, with consideration of the actions and recommendations of the General Assembly, SOL Innovations Committee, and its own determinations.

### **The Board of Education Retreat on April 22, 2015**

The purpose of the retreat was to discuss possible revisions to the SOA.

Discussion topics included:

- Amendments to comport with legislation passed by the General Assembly
- Continued discussion of issues raised at the Board retreat October 22, 2014
- Review of staff proposals for revisions to the SOA, including changes and graduation requirements and accreditation procedures

Areas of discussion from the retreat included ranged from short term and immediate changes to the SOA that could be made (for example, implementation of passed legislation) to more systemic and comprehensive changes that would need further research and development. The content areas discussed and brought forward for further study and possible action at the retreat included:

1. 140 clock hours: should this be required for some course, such as laboratory science, but not for others?
2. Should revisions affecting standard and verified credits be made?
3. Should a “real world” experience in learning be part of the formal graduation requirements?
4. If “competency-based” tests are to be used to establish student mastery of content, what tests are available?
5. What is the appropriate number of end-of-course tests—for which subjects?
6. What other tests are available that might be used to define college readiness and career readiness?
7. Should accreditation be based on a number of factors in addition to the graduation index and SOL test results?
8. How could demonstration of college and career readiness be achieved by means in addition to, or as a replacement from, some end-of-course tests?

9. What factors and skills should be included in the definition of career and college readiness? What does a student need to have mastered upon graduation?
10. What could be alternative methods of earning verified credit: extended learning through community internships? Semester long projects?

**The Board of Education's Committee on School and Division Accountability Meetings: 2015-2016**

The focus of the Board's Committee on School and Division Accountability since the retreat has been systematic and sequential review of recommended revisions of the SOA in both the short and long term. Formal Board of Education actions resulting from the committee's work have been the adoption of the "Fast Track" revisions to the SOA, effective October 2015, which included accreditation ratings recognizing school improvement in Standards of Learning testing results and the graduation index, adoption of related guidelines for the waiver of the 140 clock hour requirement and local alternative paths to standard units of credit, and implementation of legislative requirements.

At the October 2015 meeting, a definition and framework for the life-long, career-ready graduate was introduced. The framework expands the expected competencies of a Virginia graduate from content knowledge to include workplace skills, community and civic engagement, and career pathways. Each of these competency areas have been further defined and continue to be shaped by Board discussions and stakeholders, such as the SOL Innovations Committee and roundtable participants. Legislation enacted and pending for 2016 reflects General Assembly involvement. More detailed proposals and revisions to the graduation and diploma requirements in the SOA have been brought forward and discussed by Board members in the ensuing months, as the Virginia "Profile of a Graduate" has been further developed.

**K-12 Legislation Related to the Board of Education’s Review and Revision of  
the Standards of Accreditation  
(2014-2016)**

**2016 General Assembly Session**

**Graduation Requirements**

**HB 895 (Greason) SB 336 (Miller) High school graduation; Board of Education to develop requirements**

- Removes language naming specific types of diplomas (Standard and Advanced Studies) and uses the reference “diploma” or “diplomas”
- Removes language naming specific types of credit for graduation (standard and verified units) and references graduation requirements as prescribed by the Board of Education
- Requires the Board, in establishing graduation requirements, to: (i) develop and implement a Profile of a Virginia Graduate that identifies the knowledge and skills that students should attain during high school in order to be successful contributors to the economy of the Commonwealth, in consultation with stakeholders representing elementary and secondary education, higher education, and business and industry in the Commonwealth and including parents, policymakers, and community leaders in the Commonwealth
- Requires that the Profile of a Virginia Graduate give due consideration to critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship.
- Requires the Board to emphasize the development of core skill sets in the early years of high school and, for the later years of high school, to establish multiple paths towards college and career readiness that include opportunities for internships, externships, and credentialing
- Adds to the existing graduation requirements the completion of an Advanced Placement, honors, or International Baccalaureate course as an alternative to the earning of a career and a technical education credential approved by the Board

Status 3/11: The House amended SB 336 to add two enactment clauses. The first required the Board of Education to report on graduation requirements to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education no later than September 1, 2017. The second required General Assembly statutory approval prior to the new graduation requirements taking effect. The Senate did not accept these amendments, and the bills went to conference.

Through conference action, an amendment in the nature of a substitute for HB 895 was adopted, which removes the enactment clause requiring General Assembly statutory approval prior to the new graduation requirements taking effect. However, through new enactment clauses, the bill as adopted adds requirements and a timeline for Board of Education actions as follows:

- No later than August 1, 2016, the Board shall notify each local school board of its plan for implementation of the provisions of the bill for the Profile of a Virginia Graduate and graduation requirements
- Comments shall be solicited from each local school board and from the public on the Board's Web site for at least 12 months
- No later than July 31, 2017, the Board shall conduct at least one public hearing in each of the eight superintendent's regions relating to its plan to implement the bill's provisions for a Profile of a Virginia Graduate and graduation requirements
- No later than September 1, 2017, the Board shall submit proposed regulations to establish graduation requirements as provided in the bill to the Registrar of Regulations and submit a report on the proposed regulations to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health
- After September 1, 2017, the Board shall conduct at least one public hearing in each of the eight superintendent's regions relating to its proposed regulations to establish graduation requirements
- No later than December 1, 2017, the Board shall submit to the Registrar of Regulations final regulations to establish graduation requirements including provisions of the bill
- That the graduation requirements shall apply to each student who enrolls in high school as (i) a freshman after July 1, 2018; (ii) a sophomore after July 1, 2019; (iii) a junior after July 1, 2020; or (iv) a senior after July 1, 2021

### **Standards of Learning Tests**

#### **HB 241 (Lingamfelter) and SB 538 (Surovell) Students who are English language learners; Board to consider certain assessments**

- Requires the Board of Education to consider assessments aligned to the Standards of Learning that are structured and formatted in a way that measures the content knowledge of students who are English language learners and that may be administered to such students as Board of Education-approved alternatives to Standards of Learning end-of-course English reading assessments. An identical bill, SB 548 (Barker) was incorporated in SB 538.

Status 3/11: SB 538 has been signed by the Governor, and HB 241 has been enrolled and communicated to the Governor.

**SB 203 (Miller) Public schools; Standards of Learning assessments**

- Requires that the Standards of Learning assessments in all grades shall meet but not exceed the minimum requirements established by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, P.L. **89-10**, as amended. This bill incorporated identical bills SB 441 (Edwards), SB 498 (Sturtevant), and SB 525 (McPike).

Status: Continued to 2017 in Senate Education and Health

**SB 427 (Miller) Standards of Learning assessments: refusal to take**

- Excludes from the calculation of the passage rate of a Standards of Learning assessment for the purposes of state accountability any student whose parent has decided to not have his child take a Standards of Learning assessment, unless such exclusions would result in the school's not meeting any required state or federal participation rate.

Status 3/11: Enrolled bill communicated to the Governor

**SB 428 (Miller) Standards of Learning assessments; administration time frame**

- Requires that, beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, the SOL assessments in grades three through five would be administered over two consecutive school days and limited to two hours each day.

Status: Continued to 2017 in Senate Education and Health.

**SOL Innovation Committee**

**HB 525 (LeMunyon) Standards of Learning Innovation Committee; review of standardized testing in public high schools.**

- As introduced, requires the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee to review and, no later than November 1, 2016, make recommendations to the General Assembly on the number, subjects, and question composition of standardized tests administered to public high school students in the Commonwealth

- Amended by the Senate to require that the recommendations be made to the Board of Education (and not the General Assembly) after approval by a majority of the legislative members of the Committee in attendance and a majority of the non-legislative members of the Committee in attendance.
- Requires the Board to report any recommendations it adopts or endorses to the General Assembly.

Status 3/11: After rejection of the Senate amendments by the House, the bill went to conference, where a substitute bill was adopted. The substitute bill:

- Requires the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee to make recommendations after its review of standardized tests to the Board of Education and the General Assembly (added language about the General Assembly receipt of the report back to the bill)
- Retains the conditions for approval of the recommendations
- Requires the Board to review the recommendations and submit any comments on them deemed appropriate to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health in advance of the 2017 Regular Session of the General Assembly

**HB 894 (Greason) Standards of Learning Innovation Committee; change in membership.**

- Requires that the membership of the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee include at least one representative of a four-year public institution of higher education and at least one representative of a two-year public institution of higher education and specifies that the business representative or representatives on the Committee shall represent the business community
- Amended in the Senate to delete the reference to the General Assembly under current Code which states that the Committee, under the direction of the Secretary, shall make periodic recommendation to the Board of Education and to the General Assembly.
- Includes language added to state that “an affirmative vote by a majority of the legislative members in attendance and a majority of non-legislative members in attendance shall be required for the Committee to adopt any recommendations.”
- Requires the Board to report any recommendations of the Committee the Board adopts or endorses to the General Assembly

Status: 03/11: The House rejected the Senate substitute and the Senate requested a conference committee. The bill as adopted by the conference committee:

- Retains the deletion of the General Assembly as a recipient of Standards of Learning Innovation Committee recommendations and leaves the requirement that such recommendations be made to the Board of Education
- Adds another member from the Virginia Senate to the Committee membership
- Adds that Board of Education deemed appropriate comments on Committee recommendations be submitted to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health in advance of the next regular session of the General Assembly

### **Accreditation**

#### **SB 368 (McDougle) Public schools; standards of accreditation.**

- Requires the Board of Education to review the accreditation status of a school once every three years if the school has been fully accredited for three consecutive years. The Board shall accredit the school for another three years if it finds that the school would have been accredited every year of review period.
- Permits the Board of Education to review the accreditation status of certain schools once every two years or once every three years, provided that any school that receives a multiyear accreditation status other than full accreditation shall be covered by a Board-approved multiyear corrective action plan for the duration of the period of accreditation. The bill also requires that the multiyear corrective action plan include annual written progress updates to the Board and specifies that a multiyear accreditation status shall not relieve any school or division of annual reporting requirements.
- Provides that, if the Board determines through the school academic review process that a failure of schools within a division to achieve full accreditation is related to division-level failure to implement the SOQ or other division-level action or inaction, the Board may require a division-level academic review.
- Requires each school board to submit a corrective action plan after review to the Board for approval. The plan sets forth specific actions and a schedule for achievement of full accreditation by schools within the division.
- Allows return of the corrective action plan to the school board if the Board determines that the plan is not sufficient to enable all schools within the division

to achieve full accreditation, with directions to submit an amended plan pursuant to Board guidance.

Status: 03/11 Enrolled bill communicated to Governor

## **Summaries of Previous General Assembly Sessions**

### **2015 General Assembly Session**

#### **Standards of Learning Tests**

**HB 1490 (Habeeb)** required the Board to provide for expedited retake criteria at all grade levels.

**HB 1615 (Greason)** was passed to permit the end-of-course and end-of-grade Standards of Learning assessments prescribed by the Board of Education to be integrated to include multiple subject areas.

#### **Accreditation**

**HB 1672 (Greason) and SB 727 (Black)** repealed the A-F school grading system created in 2013 and provided requirements for the redesign of the School Performance Report Card.

**HB 1674 (Greason)** provided for Board multi-year review of school accreditation status.

**HB 1873 (Krupicka) and SB 1320 (Locke)** required the Board of Education to promulgate regulations for school accreditation ratings, recognizing progress and growth.

#### **Graduation Requirements**

**HB 1675 (Greason)** provided for local school divisions to waive the requirement for students to receive 140 clock hours of instruction to earn a standard unit of credit upon providing the Board with satisfactory proof, based on Board guidelines, that the students have learned the content and skills included in the relevant Standards of Learning.

**SB 1236 (Favola)** eliminated the term “Special Diploma: in the Code and replaced it with “Applied Diploma.”

## **2014 General Assembly Session**

### **Accreditation**

**HB 1229 (Landes) and SB 324 (Miller)** Delayed the implementation of the A-F school performance grading system by two years, to October 1, 2016 and specified factors that the Board of Education may consider to produce a grade for each public elementary and secondary school in the Commonwealth.

### **Standards of Learning Tests**

**HB 930 (Greason) and SB 306 (Deeds)** provided that the number and type of Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments shall not exceed 17 specified assessments in grades three through eight: reading and mathematics in grades three through eight; science in grades five and eight; writing in grade eight; and Virginia Studies and Civics and Economics once each at the grade levels deemed appropriate by each local school board.

**SB 270 (Miller)** directed the Board of Education to require only mathematics and English reading Standards of Learning assessments for third graders.

### **Graduation Requirements**

**HB 1054 (Loupassi)** provided that, in establishing course and credit requirements for a high school diploma, the Board of Education shall consider all computer science course credits earned by students to be science course credits, mathematics course credits, or career and technical education credits.

## History of the Work of the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee

The Standards of Learning Innovation Committee was created by HB 930 in the 2014 legislative session. The purpose of the Committee is to provide the Board of Education (BOE) and General Assembly with suggestions on changes to the Standards of Learning assessments, authentic individual student growth measures, alignment between the Standards of Learning and assessment, and ideas on innovative teaching in the classroom.

The Committee's **Vision Statement** is as follows: The Standards of Learning Innovation Committee is guided by a commitment to inspire, engage, and personalize learning for every student in the Commonwealth. The Committee's focus is to ensure Virginia has an accountability system that is fair, balanced, and supportive of this vision as the Commonwealth prepares our students for success beyond their high school years.

Committee members developed **principle statements** and **interim recommendations** which were approved unanimously by the Committee on November 6, 2014. These statements and recommendations were included in the [2014 Executive Summary for the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee](#) and the [Interim Report July 2014 - November 2014 Standards of Learning Innovation Committee](#). As presented, the principle statements and the recommendations were:

- **Statement of Principle I:** The state accountability system should **acknowledge the progress of schools** toward meeting the accreditation benchmarks and should recognize individual student growth.
  1. Recommend that the BOE and the General Assembly revise the SOA to **add accreditation ratings** which 1) recognize the progress of schools that do not pass the accreditation benchmarks, but have significantly improved their pass rates and which 2) recognize schools that did not meet accreditation benchmarks, but have demonstrated significant growth for the majority of students. For example, schools that have not met the 70% or 75% pass rate benchmarks required for full accreditation but have demonstrated significant improvement in their pass rates might be rated as “provisionally accredited – significant progress demonstrated.” Schools that have not improved their overall pass rates but have demonstrated growth on the statewide reading and/or mathematics tests for a majority of their students might receive a rating of “provisionally accredited – significant student growth.” The BOE should develop guidelines to ensure clarity and consistency.
  2. Recommend that the General Assembly and the BOE add to the SOA an **appeals process** for schools that are 1) not fully accredited, 2) do not demonstrate significant improvement in their pass rates, and 3) do not demonstrate significant growth on the state assessments for their students. Such an appeals process would allow schools that do not achieve one of these three ratings but meet other criteria as defined by the BOE to appeal

their rating. The BOE should develop guidelines on eligible schools and acceptable evidence.

3. Recommend that the BOE and the General Assembly revise the SOA to **provide flexibility in how often schools are accredited**. Schools might be accredited annually, every three years, or every five years based on their past accreditation status. Schools that do not achieve full accreditation would be permitted to request that their accreditation rating be recalculated the following year. Pass rates on the state-mandated tests would continue to be posted annually on the School Performance Report Card.
  4. Recommend that the Governor and the General Assembly **support funding** to provide students with opportunities for on-demand testing, additional opportunities for retests, and opportunities to demonstrate growth from the beginning of the school year to the end. This effort may include continued movement toward a Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) format.
  5. Recommend that the Governor and the General Assembly **support funding** to provide opportunities for students in elementary and middle school levels who have failed a SOL test but came close to meeting the benchmark, to retake the test during the same test administration. Such opportunities would be provided as an option for students and parents; students would not be required to retake a failed test.
- **Statement of Principle II: Alternative opportunities** for students to **demonstrate college and career readiness** in order to meet graduation requirements should be provided. Doing so will foster innovation and creativity in the classroom and better align student skills with workforce needs.
6. Recommend that the Governor and the General Assembly support legislation and funding to **provide incentives for local school divisions to 1) identify alternative ways for students to accrue standard credits outside of the traditional seat time requirements and 2) to identify additional opportunities to earn verified credits beyond passing an end-of-course SOL test or a BOE-approved test**. Recommend that the BOE establish guidelines to ensure that students learn the content and skills included in the SOL.
  7. Recommend that the BOE **expand** the availability of **locally awarded verified credits** to students in subjects where SOL tests are not mandated by federal requirements. **School divisions would be permitted to award verified credits to any student who has demonstrated proficiency in the content through an alternative assessment**.
- **Statement of Principle III: As the SOL are revised, they should reflect the nature and complexity of the knowledge and skills needed** for students to participate in the global community. The implementation timeline should allow

sufficient time for the incorporation of new content and skills into the curriculum before their inclusion in the state tests used for accountability.

- a. Recommend that the BOE **consider revisions to the SOA** that give attention to the skills deemed important for success in college, career, and citizenship. Such a focus suggests that content standards will be fewer and deeper and will reflect increased emphasis on essential skills in areas such as communication, problem solving, and critical and creative thinking at the high levels needed for success beyond school. The revision process for the SOL should also include opportunities for input from business, institutes of higher education, and citizens to ensure that the revised standards include the knowledge and skills that are most important and relevant to students' future success.
8. Recommend to the BOE that the **revision schedule for the SOL be structured** so that school divisions have sufficient time to incorporate new content and skills into the curriculum before it is included on state assessments.
9. Recommend that the BOE and the Department of Education consider the inclusion of interdisciplinary assessments as new tests measuring the revised SOL are developed.
- **Statement of Principle IV:** The state accountability system should allow for a **balance between alternative assessments and the existing assessments** that comprise the state assessment system, allowing for flexibility within school districts.
11. Recommend that the Governor and the General Assembly support funding for **initiatives at the local level** that demonstrate the use of effective authentic alternative measures of student growth and achievement. Funding should be included for professional development and for increased capacity at the Virginia Department of Education in order to provide technical assistance to local school divisions and should provide opportunities for collaboration between local school divisions and Virginia's institutes of higher education.
12. Recommend that the BOE and the Department of Education **identify and disseminate best practices** in the use of authentic and/or alternative assessments by local school divisions.

On October 29, 2015, the Committee unanimously approved their **second round of recommendations** which used as a foundation the Committee's 2014 interim recommendations cited above. The recommendations which follow are found in the [2015 Executive Summary for the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee Report](#) and in the [November 2014 - November 2015 Report for the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee](#).

- **Statement of Principle I:** Virginia’s education system should prepare our students for success in post-secondary education, the workforce, and participation as productive systems.
  1. The BOE, in collaboration with stakeholders representing K-12 education, institutions of higher education, business and industry, policymakers and community leaders should develop a Profile of a Virginia Graduate. In the development of such a Profile, the BOE should consider the “5 Cs” – critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship – needed for success in the Virginia economy.
    - a. Upon development of a Profile of a Virginia Graduate, the BOE and the Department of Education should identify the knowledge and skills that students should attain during their public school experience in order to achieve the expectation described in the profile.
    - b. High school graduation requirements should be adjusted as needed to conform to the new expectations identified in this Profile. High schools should be redesigned so that students move from attaining core knowledge and skills in the early years to one of several alternative paths toward college and career readiness.
    - c. As change toward a new set of expectations for Virginia’s students occurs, current SOL should continue to be updated on a regular revision schedule and should emphasize a smaller number of deeper, more meaningful standards. Revised objectives should reflect the adopted Profile of a Virginia Graduate and the learning needs of today’s students and begin the transition process to the new Virginia expectations.
    - d. To support the change in student expectations, the BOE should identify the types and timing of assessments that best align with the skills and knowledge outlined in that Profile.
    - e. The BOE and the Department of Education should offer school divisions assistance in developing curricula to support the new student expectations. Model curricula, suggested instructional strategies, and sample lesson plans that school divisions may choose to use in implementing the new SOL should be provided.
  2. The BOE and Department of Education should adopt a framework for assessing student learning that recognizes the importance of classroom assessment in improving instruction, emphasizes growth measures in elementary and middle schools, and provide options for students in high school to demonstrate readiness for success upon graduation.
    - a. Assessments should include content, formats, and vocabulary that is developmentally appropriate, valid, and fair, require students to construct responses rather than selecting answers, and include

one or more interdisciplinary measures of learning that require work at higher cognitive levels.

b. In adopting such a model, the BOE and Department of Education should redesign high school, so that students spend the early high school years developing core skill sets, and later years following one of several alternative paths toward college and career readiness (e.g. internships/apprenticeships, early college, workplace and career readiness certifications, and/or student portfolio that demonstrates mastery of essential skills). This will require options for relevant college and career readiness assessments that may serve in place of assessment requirements that are included in the current system. As mentioned in recommendation 1.b., this will also require the revision of graduation requirements and replacement and/or elimination of certain end-of course assessments while still providing options for students. Finally, these changes will also have an impact on the structure of high school and will require flexibility in order to promote innovative course development, effective professional development for high school teachers, additional support and guidance for students, and ongoing partnerships with the business community and higher education institutions.

c. The assessment system should recognize the unique needs of students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Where possible, the model should include accommodations and alternative assessments to provide such students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

d. SOL tests should be shortened to the extent possible; the time required to complete such assessments should be appropriate for the age of the students.

e. Additionally, all assessments should be scored fairly and accurately, with partial credit being awarded for the assessment items that require multiple responses.

f. The Department of Education and local school divisions should identify ways to reduce the amount of time students spend taking locally administered benchmark tests and in other test preparation activities to developmentally appropriate levels.

g. Students should be given multiple opportunities to show proficiency rather than relying on a single point-in-time assessment during the school year.

3. The Governor, General Assembly, and the Department of Education should identify resources to support this new assessment model.

a. Funding should be allocated to the Department of Education to provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development to disseminate models and support collaboration to help educators implement the new assessment model.

- b. The Department of Education should develop a bank of high quality local alternate assessments to be provided for teachers. Training in using these assessments should be provided as well as a process for teachers to score student work on alternate local assessments across school divisions.
  - c. The Department of Education should work collaboratively with teachers, building leaders, and division-level administrators to share and advance best practices in classroom assessment. The Department of Education should collaborate with local school divisions, professional organizations, and teacher preparation programs to ensure that both practicing and pre-service teachers are trained in the ongoing use of classroom assessment strategies to support instruction.
  - d. Funding should be allocated to provide for personnel in local school divisions to implement this assessment model. Needs include curriculum and assessment specialists/coaches and counselling services at the middle and high school levels to assist with transitions and students' selection of career pathways.
  - e. Funding should be provided to develop fair, valid, and developmentally appropriate measures of student growth. One example could be a computer adaptive format.
4. The Governor should encourage further collaboration among higher education institutions, employers, and the Department of Education to ensure coordination in the PK-20 educational system. Representatives of higher education institutions (both 2- and 4-year) and of the business community should be mandated members of the SOL Innovation Committee.

**Statement of Principle II:** Appropriate changes to Virginia's existing accountability system can occur by increasing the state's emphasis on measures of individual student growth while rebalancing the emphasis on students passing standardized tests.

5. The BOE should revise the accountability system to include a variety of school quality indicators.
- a. Students' academic success should appropriately remain the main consideration in school accreditation, with consideration also given to other factors. Academic success at the school level should be represented by both "point-in-time" achievement and individual student growth measures. A variety of school quality academic indicators, reflecting the above-recommended assessment model, should be included in accreditation.
  - b. Additional school quality indicators should be considered including, at minimum: graduation rate (for schools with graduating

classes), attendance and a measure of school climate (environment of the school, shared values and goals, safety, relationships, etc.).

c. For **English Language Learners**, a student's English language proficiency should determine whether the student's score on the regular test should be used in accreditation, if a differentiated cut score or alternative assessment should be considered, or if the student's score should be excluded from accreditation.

d. In the shorter term, the BOE should provide **accreditation data that is timely, accessible and reported in ways that are actionable**, in order to drive school improvement and address gaps in achievement.

e. In the longer term, the BOE should **develop multiple pathways to school accreditation** leading to a single designation, rather than a ranking system based solely on test results.

f. **Contextual data should also be reported**, such as number of students in poverty, local financial support, etc.

6. The **BOE should continue its work in revising the school performance report card to** provide a more comprehensive school quality profile of each Virginia public school. **The school quality profiles should include information about school accountability and other factors that provide a comprehensive view of the school.** The school quality profiles should be presented in a dashboard format and should provide information "at a glance" with easy access to more detailed supporting data to allow users to view data at a variety of levels.

- a. The Governor and General Assembly should continue to allocate funding for developing and maintaining school profiles.

- b. **School profile data should include selected elements that are important to school quality and of interest to parents and the public.** These elements should be descriptive of the community in which the school operates as well as indicative of whole child education (e.g. participation in fine arts and extracurricular programs and measures of equity).

- c. The school profile should include a link or space where a school **may self-report** areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

- d. The dashboard should **display data in formats that provide context** (e.g. peer group comparisons, trends over time, etc.). The dashboard display should be a dynamic, "real-time" document in which information is updated as data becomes available and should allow the public to compare schools, while recognizing the complexity and potential shortcomings of some ranking systems.

7. In refining the accountability system, the BOE should **maintain and strengthen a threshold of performance below which schools receive ongoing, meaningful support that is prompt and timely.** The Department of

Education and the local school division should collaborate in determining the support that is provided.

- a. The Department of Education should consider on-site reviews as one way to offer support for school improvement. However, these reviews should only be implemented if: 1) the review and reporting protocol is based on agreed-upon research-based indicators of school success and provides meaningful feedback; 2) the review process is transparent and clearly understandable to the school and community in advance; 3) resources accompany recommended changes, including incentives for teachers to increase the time spent working with colleagues to strengthen their own skills and to improve the performance of the school as a whole; and 4) the review process leverages technology applications such as video-based observations, distance coaching, online collaboration, and video conferencing as options.
- b. Any support strategies or programs should acknowledge that meaningful, lasting improvements will not occur absent engagement of the people who are doing the work with students. Therefore, strategies for improvement should be designed or chosen with significant participation of school staff.
- c. The system should encourage and motivate continuous improvement for all schools, whether meeting accreditation benchmarks or not.