



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: July 13, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Release of July 1, 2017 School-age Population Estimates Used to Distribute Fiscal Year 2020 Sales Tax Revenues, and Estimate Review Process**

Pursuant to [Section 58.1-638, Code of Virginia](#), the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia has prepared the July 1, 2017, school-age population estimates. These estimates will be used to update the fiscal year 2020 sales tax revenue distribution estimates to school divisions in the Governor's proposed amendments to the 2018-2020 biennial budget, to be released in December 2018. Fiscal year 2020 funding distributions based on the July 1, 2017 school-age population estimates will not be released until the Governor's budget release in December 2018. Please note that the distribution of actual sales tax receipts to school divisions on a semi-monthly basis in fiscal year 2020 will also be based on the July 1, 2017, school-age population estimates.

[Attachment A](#) (XLS) to this memo includes a table that displays total and percent changes of school-age population by school division from 2016 to 2017. This table, along with the detailed information from the Weldon Cooper Center referenced below, will assist divisions with the estimation of changes to their fiscal year 2020 sales tax distributions as well as assist with the technical reviews of the proposed population estimates.

The sales tax revenue distribution for fiscal year 2019 will continue to be based on the previously released July 1, 2016 school-age population estimates; please see [Superintendent's Memo No. 207-17](#) for more information.

Weldon Cooper Center School-Age Population Estimates as of July 1, 2017

A data file containing the July 1, 2017, school-age population estimate for each division (including the special education counts) and a document providing an overview of the methodology used by the Weldon Cooper Center in producing the estimates have been posted on the [Weldon Cooper Center's website](#). The availability of the estimates has also been announced to local governments via the Virginia Municipal League (VML) and the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO).

Weldon Cooper Center's estimates of school-age population (5- to 19-year-olds) as of July 1, 2017 utilize U.S. Census Bureau population estimates as of July 1, 2017, with adjustments as required by the *Code of Virginia*, to account for 18- and 19-year-olds living at a college or on a military base outside the locality where their parents/guardians reside. Pursuant to Section 58.1-638 D., the Virginia Department of Education added the number of special education students (ages 2 through 4 and 20 through 21) as reported on the December 1, 2017 special education child count to the Weldon Cooper Center's estimates. The Weldon Cooper Center provides a full description of their estimation methodology at the webpage referenced above.

Weldon Cooper Center Review Process

The July 1, 2017 school-age population estimates are open to review and inquiry until September 30, 2018, at which time they become final. School divisions and localities may inquire about a revision to their estimates provided certain criteria as established by the Weldon Cooper Center are met.

To participate in the review process, division and locality representatives should review their school-age population estimates, the methodology documents, and the Review/Inquiry Process description, available on the [Weldon Cooper Center website](#) ➔.

School division and locality representatives are urged to initiate the review and inquiry process (if any of the conditions for revision are met) by contacting the Weldon Cooper Center as soon as possible so that additional considerations can be submitted by the conclusion of the process on September 30, 2018. After this date, the estimates will be considered final and will be used in fiscal year 2020 to allocate to divisions the one and one-eighth percent state sales and use tax dedicated to public education.

The Weldon Cooper Center contact for questions is:

Hamilton Lombard, Research Analyst
Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
University of Virginia
434-982-5698
email: hamilton.lombard@virginia.edu

Please carefully review the proposed estimates of your school-age population and keep in mind the end of the review process on September 30, 2018, at which time the estimates become final.

JFL/eml

Attachments:

- A. [School-Age Population Estimates – Total and Percent Change 2016 to 2017](#) (XLS)