



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: October 19, 2018

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Designation of Level Three Performance on School Quality Indicators for State Accreditation Due to Level Two Performance for More Than Four Years

The purpose of this memorandum is to notify school divisions of guidance adopted by the Board of Education during the October 18, 2018, business meeting regarding school quality indicators that may be designated as Level Three after four consecutive years of Level Two or Level Three performance. This guidance is effective beginning with the 2018-2019 accreditation ratings.

The Board of Education's 2017 *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, or Standards of Accreditation (SOA), provide at [8VAC20-131-380.F](#) that a school quality indicator for a school may only be designated Level Two for a maximum of four consecutive years. If an indicator is designated at Level Two performance for a fifth consecutive year, it would be assigned Level Three for the fifth year.

Final Guidance Adopted by the Board of Education

For certain school quality indicators that are new in the accountability system, the baseline year for calculating consecutive years of Level Two performance designation will be 2018-2019, using data from the 2017-2018 school year. The four-year maximum duration for Level Two performance in the following school quality indicators will become applicable beginning with the accreditation ratings released for the 2022-2023 school year:

- Academic achievement gaps in English;
- Academic achievement gaps in mathematics;
- Dropout rate; and
- Chronic absenteeism.

Certain school quality indicators in the revised accreditation system have been the basis for school accreditation under the previous system. Because these are not new to the accountability system, the baseline year for calculating consecutive years of Level Two performance will be 2014-2015, using data from the 2013-2014 school year. The four-year maximum duration for Level Two performance for these school quality indicators became applicable beginning with the accreditation ratings released for the 2018-2019 school year. These indicators are:

- Academic achievement for all students in English;
- Academic achievement for all students in mathematics;
- Academic achievement for all students in science; and
- The graduation and completion index.

The College, Career, and Civic Readiness Index as a school quality indicator will not be effective for school accreditation until the 2022-2023 school year. The baseline year for calculating consecutive years of Level Two performance for this school quality indicator will be 2022-2023, based on data from the 2021-2022 school year. The four-year maximum duration for Level Two performance will become applicable to this school quality indicator beginning with the accreditation ratings released for the 2026-2027 school year.

Previous Guidance

In May 2018, the acting Superintendent of Public Instruction communicated to local division superintendents that for the 2018-2019 accreditation ratings, the four-year maximum duration of Level Two performance would not be considered for the indicators for chronic absenteeism and academic achievement gaps. The maximum duration of Level Two performance would be considered for the indicators of all students academic achievement, graduation and completion index, and dropout rate.

The school accreditation data released in September 2018 were calculated applying the four-year maximum duration of Level Two performance as it was communicated in May 2018, including dropout rates. While the final guidance would no longer apply this rule to dropout rates, no school received a Level Three designation for dropout rates due to the four-year maximum duration of Level Two performance. Local school division superintendents have been notified directly of any other required changes in indicator performance levels. This guidance does not change the accreditation ratings that were released in September 2018.

Questions about this memo can be directed to Dr. Jennifer Piver-Renna at 804-225-3698 or jennifer.piver-renna@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/ZR/JPR