



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

January 8, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Shorter Version of the Grade 3 Mathematics Standards of Learning Tests Administered in a Computer Adaptive Testing Format beginning in Spring 2016**

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce that the Virginia Department of Education will be implementing a computer adaptive test (CAT) for all online Grade 3 Mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) tests (regular, audio, Plain English, and audio Plain English tests) beginning in the spring 2016 test administration. The online computer adaptive versions of the test will be shorter than the traditional versions of the Grade 3 Mathematics test.

Providing a shorter version of the online Grade 3 Mathematics test in a CAT format is part of Governor McAuliffe's initiative to shorten the length of the mathematics SOL tests for elementary school students. Since computer adaptive tests are customized to each student's ability level, fewer questions can be administered to accurately determine each student's achievement level. Because of this advantage of the CAT format, the computer adaptive version of the test will be approximately 35% shorter in total test length than the traditional version.

Due to the implementation of the shorter Grade 3 Mathematics CAT, the [SOL Test Blueprint](#) for Grade 3 Mathematics has been updated. The blueprint contains the number of test items for the computer adaptive version of the online test and the number of items for the traditional version of the test that will be administered in paper/pencil format. The Grade 3 Mathematics CAT will contain 28 operational test items that are scored and 4 field test items, for a total test length of 32 items.

An Elementary Mathematics CAT Training Test is available for elementary school students on the Department of Education [Web site](#). The Elementary Mathematics CAT Training Test may be used with grade 3 students so they can practice navigating through a mathematics CAT prior to the actual test-taking experience.

Questions regarding this information should be directed to student assessment staff at [Student\\_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov) or (804) 225-2102.

SRS/SLR/cb