
Board of Education

Annual Report

(Early Draft)

2023



**Board of Education
Commonwealth of Virginia**

Board of Education

Annual Report 2023

Adopted in ____2023 by the

Board of Education

Grace Turner Creasey, President

Bill Hansen, Vice President

Dale Sturdifan

Anne B. Holton

Andy Rotherham

Dr. H. Alan Seibert

Dr. Amber Northern

Debbie Kilgore

Mashea Ashton

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dr. Lisa Coons

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Virginia Department of Education

P. O. Box 2120

Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

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I. Executive Summary

Article VIII, Section 5, of the Constitution of Virginia requires the Virginia Board of Education (“Board”) to make annual reports to the Governor and the General Assembly concerning the condition and needs of public education in the Commonwealth. While the Board’s previous annual reports have noted challenges facing Virginia’s public education system, the last few years have seen those challenges rise to an unprecedented scale. The available data show that the learning loss experienced by Virginia students during the pandemic are complex, pervasive, and need significant and ongoing support to return to pre-pandemic levels—let alone to accelerate beyond to the future for which our families hope.

For example, the post-pandemic National Assessment of Educational Progress (“NAEP”) data from 2022 and the 2023 Standards of Learning (“SOL”) data are a clear call to action. The NAEP reported the biggest drop in fourth-grade reading performance in 30 years and the first-ever drop in math. These losses were most severe among low-income and minority students and students whose schools were closed longest. The results from the 2022–2023 SOL assessments similarly highlight the impact of the pandemic and prolonged school closures, but also reveal a long-term downward trend in performance.

The disconcerting NAEP and SOL data are mirrored by assessments of early learning. The Commonwealth’s youngest learners did not fare well on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Survey (“PALS”), an early literacy assessment that identifies at-risk students. Although PALS data from Spring 2023 show a second consecutive year of improvement, the percentage of students below benchmark rather remained 4.6 points above the pre-pandemic rate of 19.9 percent. In other words, nearly one quarter of early learners remain below benchmark.

In order to address these problems, the Board’s work in 2023 has focused on increasing the rigor of learning standards and revising the current accreditation and accountability system. The Board has already approved new, best-in-class standards in History and Social Science and Mathematics. It will soon complete revisions of English and Computer Science. The Board has also focused on Virginia’s current accreditation and accountability system, which has shown itself unable to detect decreased student achievement and differentiate school performance. The Board has initiated a regulatory change to refocus the accreditation and accountability model on growth, achievement, and career readiness. The hallmarks of the new system will be transparency through the accurate reporting of rigorous standards and re-designed assessments to track student performance to national benchmarks. Accreditation will show those schools that are growing students toward clear goals and how schools are achieving those goals, as well as ensure that students are reading for the career goals of their choice. Most importantly, the new accountability structure will generate data for families and the allocation of statewide supports to address the learning loss facing Virginia students.

Virginia schools are also still being affected by staff shortages. While many school divisions do not face the same shortages as reported in 2022, critical shortages continue in pockets of rural and high-need communities. The number of teacher vacancies correlates with the downward trend in Educator Preparation Program (“EPP”) enrollment. According to the state data, enrollment has [XXX] in the 2022-23 academic year, which is a [XXX] enrollment rate from the preceding [XXX]. To address staffing challenges, Governor Youngkin has led a bipartisan effort to invest in

Virginia's teachers by effecting a 5 percent pay raise in August 2022 (\$232.2 million) and July 2023 (with FY2023 carryover, \$542.9 million), as well as an additional 2 percent in January 2024 (\$54.6 million). The Board will also continue to explore alternative approaches to teacher licensure and is in the process of updating its prescribed Standards of Quality ("SOQ"), which will be proposed to the General Assembly, to address the needs of school divisions in a post-pandemic era.

School divisions are currently tasked with addressing these issues while also returning to pre-COVID spending levels as over \$3.2 billion in ESSER funds are phasing out. Similarly, early childhood programs face a reduction of federal funding, leaving families and programs vulnerable and in need of innovative partnerships to ensure that child care remains affordable.

As the Board moves forward with its work in 2024, its focus must remain on learning loss recovery and ensuring that remaining ESSER dollars and the additional state flexible funding meet the needs of schools. This focus must be supplemented by an aggressive, collective focus on reducing chronic absenteeism in Virginia's schools. The Governor's Chronic Absenteeism task force will provide recommendations to the Board in December 2023, and the Board will work quickly to enact solutions for the 131 school divisions in the Commonwealth.

Virginia's education system is at a fork in the road, and none can afford for the Board, the Governor, the General Assembly, school divisions, families, or students to take the easy path. The road may be difficult, but we are confident that around the bend we will find our brighter future.

II. Outline of the Conditions and Needs of Public Schools

A. 2023 Student Achievement Results

Student performance for the 2022–2023 school year shows persistent learning loss for students in grades 3–8. Over 50 percent of such students are at-risk or below proficiency in reading, and two-thirds are at-risk or non-proficient in mathematics. Although the data shows that 70 percent of students demonstrate minimum proficiency on reading SOL assessments, percentage masks the number of “at-risk students.” In grade 3–8 math, students are still 15 percentage points (65%) behind their peers, which is an increase of only 4 percentage points since the pandemic. Notably, in Grade 5 through 7 reading, students have fallen 7 to 9 points behind their pre-pandemic peers and, in grade 3–8 mathematics, students are up to 19 points behind pre-pandemic peers. Science and social studies scores in grade 3–8 also show persistent gaps between 2019 pre-pandemic peers and 2022–2023 student performance.

Virginia student groups show that learning gaps in grade 3–8 are widening. Half of grade 3–8 students are not passing or at risk of not passing their reading SOL, and two in three students are at risk or not passing their mathematics SOL assessments. English learner students are passing reading at less than 40 percent and only 36 percent are passing mathematics. The largest gaps in performance continue to be among students with disabilities, with 40 percent passing reading and a 35 percent passing math. Black students show continued gaps from pre-pandemic performance, with a 56 percent passage rate in reading and a 20-point gap (or 47 percent pass rate) in mathematics. Finally, Hispanic students show a 56 percent pass rate in reading and a 20-point gap (51 percent pass rate) in mathematics from pre-pandemic peers.

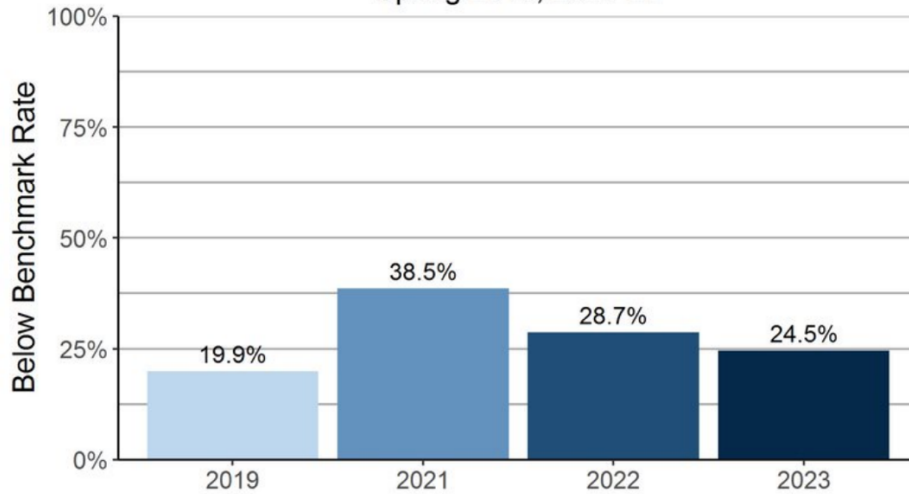
High school end-of-course data does show some learning loss recovery. Students are performing at the similar proficiency rates as their pre-pandemic peers in reading and showed improvement to 81 percent pass rate (compared to an 85 percent pass rate in 2018–2010) in high school mathematics. School divisions should monitor closely localized concerns, as variances in high school performance was seen across the Commonwealth.

To combat these persistent gaps in student performance, the Virginia Department of Education (“VDOE”) launched “ALL In” high intensity tutoring on September 7, 2023. This model follows the [Annenberg research study](#) released by Brown University in 2021 and calls on school divisions to provide learning acceleration tutoring with small tutor-to-student ratios, to focus on 3-to-5 hours of tutoring a week, and to provide an extended duration between 18 and 36 weeks of tutoring. To learn more, visit [ALL In Virginia](#).

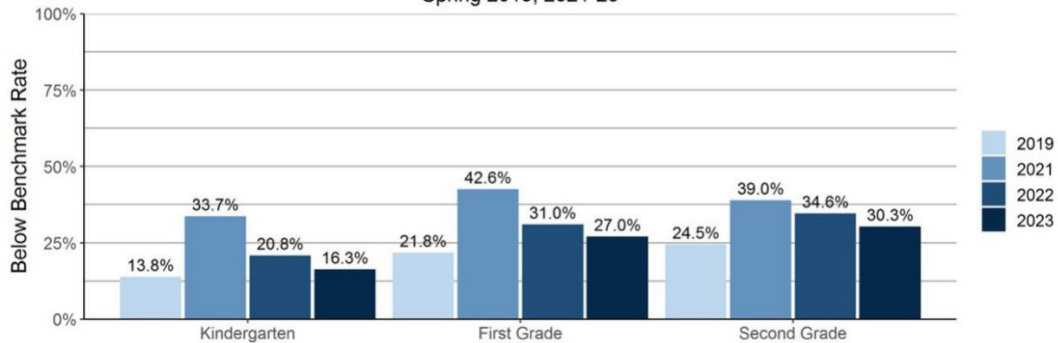
Virginia’s early learners are seeing slow improvements in learning. Improvements are measured in a reduction of students performing below benchmark in PALS. The amount of improvement in below-benchmark rates from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023 was incremental across each of the three grade levels. See Figures [XXX] and [XXX] below. Spring 2023 PALS below-benchmark rates marked the second consecutive year of improvement—that is, the percentage of students falling below-benchmark decreased—for the spring assessment window. The Spring 2023 below-benchmark rate fell from Spring 2022 by 4.2 percentage points, with an overall drop of 14 percentage points since peak height in Spring 2021. Still, at 24.5 percent, the Spring 2023 below benchmark rate remained 4.6 percentage points above the 2019 pre-pandemic rate of 19.9 percent.

In the Fall of 2024, Virginia will shift from PALS to VALLS in accordance with the Virginia Literacy Act.

K-2 Total Below Benchmark Rates
Spring 2019, 2021-23



K-2 Below Benchmark Rates
Spring 2019, 2021-23



B. 2023 Chronic Absenteeism

“Chronically absent” means that a student misses two or more instructional days each month (18 days, or 10 percent of a 180-day school year), regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused.

As VDOE reviewed academic data, the strongest factor in student performance was daily attendance. Students who are chronically absent are struggling to recover from learning loss the most, and the percentage of students who are chronically absent has doubled with 41,159 more students were chronically absent compared to their 2018–2019 peers. In 2018–2019, one-in-ten grade 3–8 students were chronically absent, while 17 percent of all grade 3–8 students were chronically absent in 2022–2023. Students who are chronically absent show a decrease of 25 percent in mathematics and 18 percent in reading. In 2023, Virginia’s student groups also

demonstrated disproportionate chronic absences: one-in-four economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities were chronically absent, and one-in-five black and Hispanic students were absent. The student groups who missed the most school demonstrated the largest gaps in unfinished learning as well. ALL in VA has focused on an intensive campaign to ensure students return to school and attend courses every day. The VDOE has promoted a five-prong approach, and the Governor has launched a statewide Chronic Absenteeism Task Force. The Task Force will bring recommendations to the Board at the conclusion of 2023, and the Board will work to address appropriate policy recommendations.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (“USED”), high school regular attendance is a better dropout indicator than test scores. A student who is chronically absent in any year between the eighth and twelfth grade is seven times more likely to drop out of school. In addition, USED reports that children who are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade are much less likely to read on grade level by the third grade. Students who cannot read at grade level by the third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school.

School Year	All Grades	Gr K–2	Gr 3–8	Gr 9–12
2018–2019	10.73%	9.75%	8.73%	14.49%
2020–2021	11.07%	13.08%	9.87%	11.48%
2021–2022	20.06%	19.81%	17.17%	24.37%
2022–2023	19.47%	20.54%	16.54%	22.87%

C. Special Education Update

1. Special Education Training

a. General Supervision and Monitoring

During 2023, VDOE’s Department of Special Populations (“VDOE-DSP”) provided instructional leadership, professional development, resources, and direction to increase the capacity of divisions, schools, and other educational settings to improve educational outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. The special education professional development, related resources, and technical assistance provided evidence-based practices and materials that focused on ensuring quality educational opportunities for children and youth with disabilities. The access focused resources provided focused general education curriculum inclusionary focused training and encouraged effective practices that lead to successful school achievement and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities from ages 2 through 21. The ongoing, regularly scheduled activities were field-tested to determine their effectiveness. VDOE staff, in collaboration with multiple state-funded partners that implement the VDOE’s initiatives and priorities, provided instructional leadership for addressing the educational needs of students identified with specific disabilities in all disability categories and specialized processes or procedures.

Professional development, training, and technical assistance efforts were driven by demographic and achievement-related data analyses. Over the past school year, professional learning/training

and resources for general and special educators, paraeducators, related services providers, school-based and district leaders included the following: accessible instructional materials, individualized education program development, specially designed instruction in literacy (reading and mathematics), high-leverage practices in collaboration, assessment, social/emotional/behavioral, instruction, disability specific supports, inclusive practices, secondary transition, evaluation and eligibility, assessment behavior intervention and discipline, leadership development, and assistive technology.

In 2023, VDOE-DSP focused on four main areas for delivery of training, professional development, and technical assistance. First, VDOE provided generalized technical assistance and guidance to a variety of stakeholders including local school divisions. Second, seven regional training and technical assistance centers (“TTAC”) and TTAC online supported professional development and assisted schools in addressing accountability and improvement goals for students with disabilities. VDOE has also provided a variety of asynchronous e-learning modules focused on general special education topics to provide an opportunity for individuals to increase knowledge and skills. These modules include topics such as the following: special education evaluation and services, calculating and reporting placement and services, and back to basics (an initiative designed to support Virginia school divisions with training teachers and division personnel on basic special education laws and regulations). Finally, VDOE holds yearlong leadership academies to prepare new directors of special education and potential special education with initial support for special education leadership.

b. Additional Special Education Monitoring Activities

In addition to activities related to cyclical comprehensive monitoring, VDOE undertook specific additional monitoring activities. VDOE notified 53 school divisions regarding noncompliance with one or more State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report indicators. VDOE staff worked with division staff and have since determined all 53 school divisions are correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirement and have corrected each individual case of student-specific noncompliance (if applicable). Twenty-four school divisions also received written notification of noncompliance with Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (“VAAP”) Participation Criteria and Determination of Significant Cognitive Disabilities for Students Participating in the 2021–2022 VAAP. As a part of this activity, VDOE staff worked with division staff and worked to determine that divisions were correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements.

As required by updated guidance from the USED’s Office of Special Education Programs, VDOE-DSP worked to ensure compliance by conducting targeted monitoring reviews to address a credible allegation. As appropriate, VDOE issues reports are requires school divisions to implement a corrective action plan to address noncompliance findings and areas of concern for program improvement. VDOE staff will continue to work with the division staff to ensure the school division is correctly implementing the specific regulatory requirements.

c. Special Education Fiscal Monitoring

During the 2021–2022 school year, VDOE monitored ten school divisions, and all ten needed corrective action plans. The corrective action plans ensure school divisions address noncompliance findings. The fiscal monitoring team has worked throughout the year and will continue to work

collaboratively with each division. Those support actions are due to close during the 2022–2023 or 2023–2024 school year.

During the 2022–2023 school year, the VDOE-DSP conducted its annual risk assessment. Prior to the review, entrance reviews were held to review the fiscal monitoring process and to answer any questions the school division staff might have. On-site reviews were conducted, followed by exit reviews with the division administrative staff. The risk assessment rubric identified seven school divisions at organizational risk, and each division was personally contacted to inform the division about the upcoming fiscal monitoring review. Notification letters were also mailed to the division superintendent and the director of special education. Fiscal monitoring letters and corrective action plans (“CAPs”) templates were sent to each local educational agency (LEA). Once drafted, the CAP will require approval by VDOE staff and will require subsequent technical assistance from the department.

The fiscal monitoring team also conducted targeted monitoring during the 2022–2023 school year and assisted other offices within the VDOE-DSP that performed monitoring on additional LEAs as well as monitoring the 16 school divisions required to set aside IDEA funding for comprehensive coordinated early intervention services, during the 2022–2023 school year.

d. Special Education Dispute Resolution

i. Special Education Parent Ombudsman

In 2023, the Special Education Ombudsman with the VDOE continued to serve as a designated neutral party who advocates for fairness and provides confidential, informal assistance, and support to parents, guardians, advocates, educators, and students with disabilities as well as a resource to all constituents in non-legal special education matters.

Specific duties of the Special Education Ombudsman include the following:

- serving as a source of information and referral regarding state and federal laws and regulations governing special education;
- providing information and support to parents of students with disabilities to help them understand and navigate the special education process;
- providing communication strategies to parents and school divisions for resolving disagreements and special education issues;
- assisting parents in developing strategies and informal options to address issues and concerns;
- promoting collaboration and positive communication between parents and school division personnel in addressing special education issues;
- providing information and resources on available options for dispute resolution, such as mediation, state complaints, and due process hearings when collaboration efforts fail;
- serving as a resource for disability related information and referrals to available programs and services for individuals with disabilities; and

- identifying, tracking, monitoring, and reporting on suspected systemic patterns of concerns that emerge from constituent contacts regarding special education services in local school division.

Over the past year, the VDOE’s Special Education Ombudsman received approximately 1,300 contacts. These contacts ranged from a single communication with a family to a series of calls and emails over an extended period to support multiple issues. While the Ombudsman addresses issues connected to a variety of special education topics, the top five categories supported over the past year include dispute resolution, discipline, placement, IEP implementation, and evaluation/eligibility. The majority of the contacts are from VDOE Superintendent’s Regions 1, 2, and 4.

Regarding contact method, about 60 percent of families reach out via telephone while the remainder of constituents utilize a designated email account. Staff in the Office of Facilities and Family Engagement make every effort to respond to all inquiries in a timely manner and effectively assist families by answering questions and providing information on how to address their specific special education related concerns. However, contact volume continues to increase beyond the capacity of the staff.

ii. Special Education Dispute Resolution

Dispute resolution activities in 2022–2023 increased significantly over the previous year in all areas, as summarized in the following table. The data below reflects the total number of complaints filed, including what may be multiple complaints filed by the same individual involving the same student. The asterisk in the table reflects that one parent filed fifteen requests for a due process hearing in the year noted. Trends across dispute resolution activities are monitored and inform the agency’s general supervision and monitoring process annually.

	2022–2023	2021–2022	2020–2021
State Complaints	206	177	101
Mediations	132	121	97
Due Process	88	133*	84
Facilitated IEPs	81	74	-

iii. Special Education State Complaints

In 2022–2023, the number of special education state complaints filed increased significantly. Specifically, special education state complaints increased in complexity, saw an increase in the number of systemic complaints, and involved disciplinary issues in greater numbers than previous years. Additionally, staff reported an increase in compliance-based complaints. Based on information shared by the federally funded dispute resolution technical assistance center, Virginia’s data and trends are consistent with trends nationally.

e. Special Education Due Process

Typically, across states, many more due process cases are filed than are fully adjudicated. Most due process cases are dismissed or settled prior to hearing. In 2022–2023, ten cases went to hearing. Of those ten cases, five were decided in favor of the school division, four were split between the parent and school division, and one was decided fully in favor of the parent.

iv. Special Education Office for Civil Rights Report

VDOE currently has three outstanding complaints to which it is responding in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General. For two of the complaints, responses have been sent by VDOE and those cases remain open. The third case has issues that have been resolved through development of a resolution agreement. The resolution agreement was signed on September 25, 2023, and the investigation has been closed.

D. Early Childhood Care and Education

1. Quality Measurement and Improvement; Workforce

In response to state law, the Virginia Board of Education continues to make progress towards establishing a unified measurement and improvement system (“VQB5”) for all publicly funded birth-to-five early childhood programs. VQB5 strengthens the quality of teaching and learning experiences in early childhood programs that serve infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, by setting shared expectations for measuring quality and supporting teachers for all birth-to-five programs. Through VQB5, teachers and leaders receive the feedback and support they need to help young children learn.

In 2022–2023, Virginia completed Practice Year Two. To position the state for full implementation, VDOE helped launch Ready Regions, which serve as the key infrastructure for VQB5, in July 2022. The Ready Regions ensured that more than 70% of all publicly funded programs participated in Practice Year 2, with over 8,000 classrooms receiving feedback on their practice multiple times through the year. More than 20,000 users, including over 16,000 educators, have entered the LinkB5 system over the past four years, a critical component of supporting the VQB5 system. This year Virginia has completed ~19,500 CLASS observations, including 92% of participating classrooms this spring. More than 1,000 certified CLASS observers support these efforts, a 500% increase in observers from 2019. More than 17,000 incentive payments went out to child care educators participating in VQB5 in 2022–2023 to help reduce turnover; this represents a \$25 million investment in child care educators with each educator eligible for up to \$2,500.

More than \$57 million was invested in early childhood improvement efforts, including supporting child care and family child care educators to use the state’s free curriculum option, StreamIn3. Programs can choose from 50+ approved curriculum including STREAMin3 which is 1 of 3 free or low-cost options, with 2,000 classrooms receiving materials, comprehensive training, and coaching. Mixed Delivery, VPI, and select Head Start partners completed VKRP screenings for 3- and 4-year-old learners, supporting efforts to individualize instruction and engage families. The Early Learning Development Standards Micro-credential was made available in English and

Spanish and Virginia continued to scale its unique intensive coaching model to support the social-emotional needs of young learners in partnership with their families.

In the Fall of 2023, all publicly funded birth-to-five programs will be required to participate in VQB5, with the first quality ratings published in Fall of 2024. The Early Childhood Advisory Committee (“ECAC”) endorsed the 2023–2024 VQB5 Guidelines on March 16, 2023, and the Board completed final review on June 15, 2023. The new guidelines will include approximately 3,600 public schools, child care centers, and family day home programs with approximately 12,000 "classrooms".

2. Early Childhood Access and Enrollment

During 2022–2023, Virginia’s early childhood programs served over 60,000 children in response to growing family demand. More than 2,000 children benefited this year from Mixed Delivery, high-quality early learning in private settings, a 40% increase from the prior year. More than 21,000 children benefited from VPI this year, including 905 in community provider settings. Demand for the Child Care Subsidy Program continues to increase steadily, with enrollment growing from ~32,700 in July 2022 to over 40,000 by June 2023. VDOE also continues to work closely with Head Start partners to ensure that Virginia maximizes all federal resources and offers access to comprehensive two-generation services for our most vulnerable families.

E. Teacher Vacancy and Recruitment Strategies

During 2023, Virginia’s teacher vacancy rate was slightly below the national average of 4% for teacher vacancies. The landscape of critical shortages varies greatly across the commonwealth with 20 percent of school divisions have zero to one vacancy. While Central Virginia had a vacancy rate of 4.7%, Southwest and the Blue Ridge areas had a vacancy rate under 3 percent.

Elementary education teachers (PK-6) comprise a large proportion of vacancies as of the first day of the 2023-2024 school year accounting for 1,205 of Virginia’s reported 3,978 teacher vacancies (30 percent).

Among the remaining top critical shortage areas, divisions report the following:

- For special education, 1,049 vacancies or 26 percent of state’s total teacher vacancies;
- For middle education (grades 6-8), 519 vacancies or 13 percent of the state’s total teacher vacancies;
- For mathematics (grades 6-12 including Algebra I), 284 vacancies or 7 percent of the state’s total teacher vacancies; and
- For career and technical education, 213 vacancies or 5 percent of the state’s total teacher vacancies.

Various reasons were reported for the drop in available teachers to fill open positions. Since 2012–2013 the need for teachers in Virginia has increased by over 10,000 more teachers (82,286 to 93,300). Education preparation programs have also produced fewer teachers per year by more than 500 program completers per year in that same time frame. The decrease in fully licensed

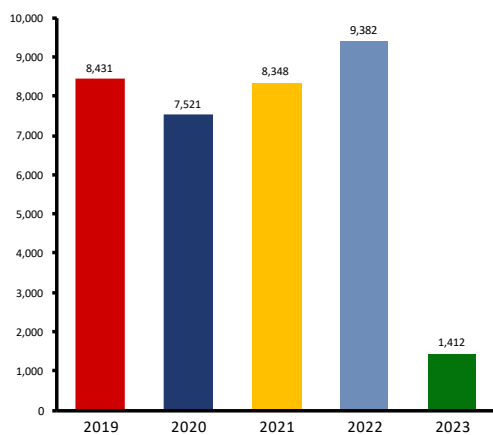
teachers coming out of approved education preparation programs has coincided with a massive increase in provisionally licensed teachers in Virginia. In 2015, there were only 117 provisionally licensed teachers compared to 8,693 now. The shift in license type requires many more teacher license processing than in the past.

Data from an April VDOE Licensure process to aid in the availability of teacher candidates. During 2023, an analysis of teacher licensure processes revealed several areas where processing experiences for applicants could be improved. Challenges that exacerbated the turnaround time for a completed licenses included the following: a paper-based system with limited digital integration; unique applications exceeding pre-pandemic levels; a backlog that led to about 123 days processing time; lack of system processing differentiation; and leadership challenges within the department of teacher education and licensure. In response to the challenge, new leadership took an all-hands approach to address the challenges and shifted the processing capacity of the agency.

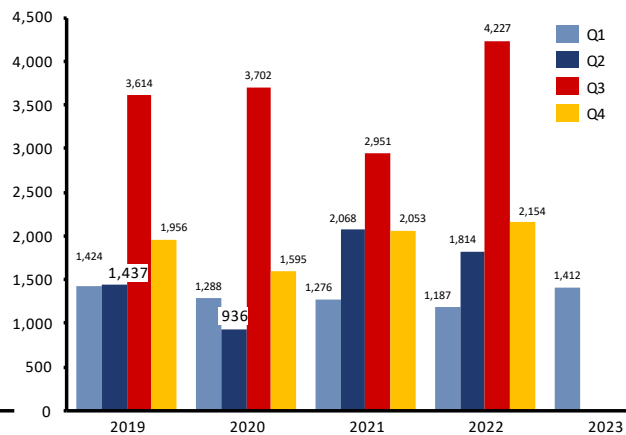
Virginia also experienced a significant backlog challenge during the spring of 2023. On May 11, 2023, licensure requests reached a high of 16,767 applications to be processed, partially due to an increase of new applications at a rate 12–14 percent daily. To address this critical challenge within VDOE, significant changes occurred in licensure processing. The Board extended the renewal period for over 12,000 requests for renewable licenses until June 2024. In addition, the licensure office had a backlog of 4,767 open initial Virginia licensure requests. Significant changes in VDOE processing allowed all licensure requests made prior to May 11, 2023, to be processed by June 30, 2023.

Applicant volume is seasonal and since 2022 exceeds pre-pandemic levels

of unique applicants annually



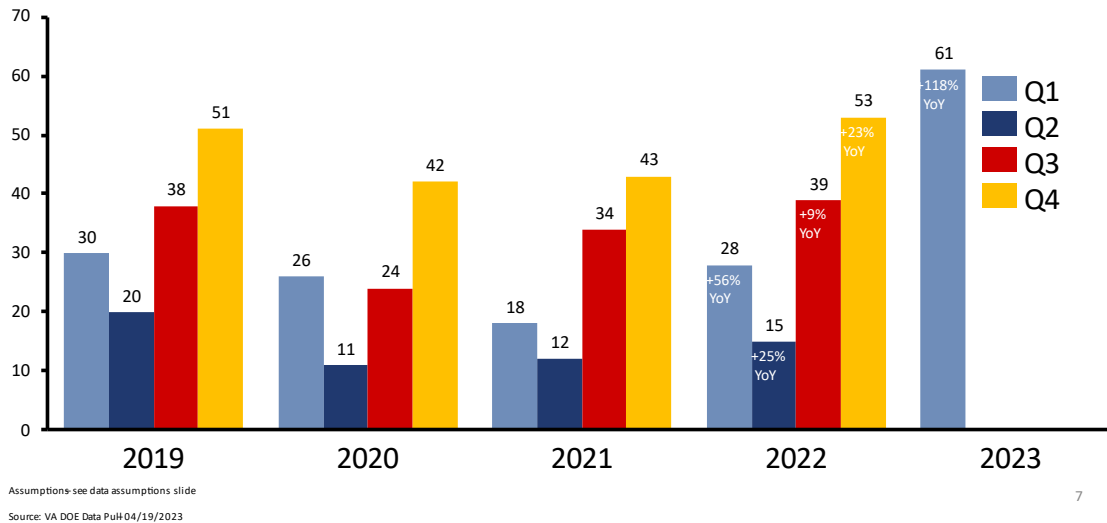
of unique applicants by quarter since 2019



Assumptions- see data assumptions slide
Source: VA DOE Data Pui#04/19/2023

Backlog age incrementally up YoY since Q2 2022

Average age of open applications at end of each quarter since 2019



While the Department of Teacher Education and Licensure transitions to a more modern and user-friendly processing system, additional licensure specialists are being trained to ensure quicker turnaround times for applicants and school divisions. The average age of a completed licenses has dropped dramatically to about 14 days. The cases that are open but not yet completed have also come down from 123 days to 18 days since May 2023. Ninety percent of all open cases are 50 days or less in age. More than half of the cases open beyond the average are due to incomplete applications being submitted. This is one of the prime issues being addressed with the new operating system to be implemented this Fall.

Additionally, in January 2023, Virginia became one of the first states in the nation to establish a U.S. Department of Labor registered apprenticeship for teaching and, under the current Administration, the VDOE has launched over \$29 million dollars in pipeline development grants, including an initial \$10 million dollar Grow Your Own-registered apprenticeship program. This program will leverage divisions, EPPs, Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (“VDOLI”) funds, and federal grants, along with a substantial commitment from VDOE to provide a no/low-cost pathway for those already in a school community to go from an associate degree to a fully certified teacher in 2 years all while earning a living wage. Along with the other developmental grants, these initiatives will help reverse the teacher shortage in Virginia.

F. 2023 School Facilities

There are 1,940 PK–12 school buildings in Virginia. Over half of all buildings have been reported by school divisions as being greater than 50 years old, with the replacement cost of these buildings estimated to be \$25 billion.

In fiscal year 2022, school divisions reported \$1.043 billion in school facility capital costs, \$1.660 billion in operations and maintenance costs, \$680.8 million in debt service costs, and \$10.235 billion in outstanding debt on school facilities. In 2022–2023, construction of five new elementary schools began at a total cost of \$223.7 million, five new middle schools at a total cost of \$278.1 million, and 79 additions/renovations projects began at a total cost of \$669.0 million.

Action by the Board and VDOE have included the following:

1. Literary Fund: Low-interest Loans

The 2022–2024 state budget authorized the Board to award up to \$400 million in low-interest school construction loans from the Literary Fund. The interest rate on Literary Fund loans is tied to the school division composite index. Following the initial application round, \$143.9 million in loan applications were approved by VDOE, and the Board has released or is in the process of releasing \$73.9 million in loans from the first application round. During fall 2023, at the Board’s direction, VDOE conducted a second-round application process where school divisions could apply for the remaining \$256.2 million in available loan funding.

2. School Construction Grants Program: Formula Grants

In fiscal year 2023, VDOE provided \$400 million in formula funding to school divisions. Division funding was allocated based on student enrollment and the composite index, with a minimum allocation of \$1 million for small divisions. Funds can be used for a variety of school facilities uses, including debt service, and funds can be carried forward across years for use by divisions.

3. School Construction Assistance Program – Competitive Grants

The 2022–2024 state budget included \$450 million in funding for the Board to award competitive grants to school divisions for high-need school construction and renovation projects. Grants awards prioritize school divisions with poor building conditions and higher fiscal need and are based on various competitive selection criteria adopted by the Board. Grants are based on 10%, 20%, or 30% of the project cost based on the fiscal need of the division.

In May 2023, the Board awarded \$365.3 million in grants for 40 school projects in 28 school divisions as follows:

School Division / Div. #	School Name / Sch. #
Appomattox County (006)	Appomattox County High (0260)
Bristol City (102)	Bristol Virginia Intermediate School (0202)
Brunswick County (013)	Brunswick County Elementary / Middle (0730)
Brunswick County (013)	Brunswick High (0650)
Buchanan County (014)	New Buchanan High (0034)

Campbell County (016)	Brookville High (0720)
Carroll County (018)	Carroll County High (1230)
Charlottesville City (104)	Buford Middle (0100)
Danville City (108)	G.L.H. Johnson Elementary (0190)
Danville City (108)	R.I.S.E Academy at the John M. Langston Campus (0139)
Danville City (108)	George Washington High (0210)
Dickenson County (026)	Ridgeview Elementary (0281)
Fredericksburg City (110)	Walker-Grant Middle (0273)
Giles County (035)	Giles High (0461)
Giles County (035)	Macy McClaugherty Elementary/Middle (0390)
Giles County (035)	Narrows High (0470)
Halifax County (041)	Halifax County High (0010)
Harrisonburg City (113)	Harrisonburg High (0012)
King and Queen County (049)	King & Queen Elementary (0200)
Lynchburg City (115)	Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle for Innovation (0170)
Nelson County (062)	Nelson County High (0710)
Newport News City (117)	Huntington Middle (0091)
Norfolk City (118)	Matthew Fontaine Maury High (0010)
Norfolk City (118)	Booker T Washington High (0880)
Northampton County (065)	Northampton High (0350)
Petersburg City (120)	Walnut Hill Elementary (0130)
Pittsylvania County (071)	Pittsylvania Vocational-Technical Center (0010)

Pittsylvania County (071)	Stony Mill Elementary (1710)
Richmond City (123)	Henderson Middle (0470)
Richmond City (123)	J.L. Francis Elementary (1710)
Richmond City (123)	Richmond Technical Center (0821)
Richmond City (123)	William Fox Elementary (0200)
Roanoke City (124)	Lincoln Terrace Elementary (0340)
Roanoke City (124)	Preston Park Elementary (0240)
Roanoke City (124)	Ruffner Operations and Professional Development Center (0120)
Rockbridge County (081)	Floyd S. Kay Technical Center (0681)
Southampton County (087)	Capron Elementary (0710)
Suffolk City (127)	John F. Kennedy Middle (0370)
Waynesboro City (130)	Wenonah Elementary (0580)
Wythe County (097)	Scott Memorial Middle (1075)

During fall 2023, VDOE conducted a second-round application process, where school divisions could apply for the remaining \$84.7 million in available competitive grant funding.

a. Description of program

b. List of approved awards

c. Second round of applications to meet continued demand

III. The Board of Education’s Work

The mission of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, in cooperation with their partners, is to develop policies and provide leadership that improve student achievement and prepare students to succeed in postsecondary education and the workplace, and to become engaged and enlightened citizens.

A. Standards of Learning

The Board is responsible for guiding the formal process of engaging educators, leaders, and the community at large in the review and revision process. When the drafting process that involves educators, leaders, college and university professors, business and industry, content specific museums and organizations is complete, VDOE submits a standards of learning document that is submitted to the Board of Education for First Review. Both History and Social Sciences and Mathematics standards were submitted during the 2023 meetings. The Board hosted six to eight hearings across the Commonwealth for each standards review, in addition to receiving feedback through digital submissions. Communication for this process was shared in multiple ways including social media, partnerships, organizations, and outreach to school divisions to encourage engagement from all stakeholders during this session. Additionally, educators from all eight superintendent's regions are called upon to serve on revision committees and took an active role in reviewing and synthesizing feedback. Finally, VDOE staff reviewed feedback with the Advisory Committee to make final edits and worked with specific individuals and groups to fact check information. The revised SOL were then presented to the Board for Final Review. Both History Social Science Standards (April 2023) and Mathematics standards (August 2023) were approved in 2023.

1. History Social Science Standards

The History and Social Science standards outline an appreciation of the attributes and actions that have made America the world’s exemplar of freedom, opportunity, and democratic ideals. The standards discuss the importance of providing students an in-depth and honest understanding of the complexities of United States and Virginia history. The History and Social Science Principles focus on not only the students’ exploration and understanding of history, social science, political, and economic systems and how those intersect, but the important role that they as individuals and collectively play in engaging in the political process to fulfill their civic obligations to maintain our democracy.

2. Mathematics Standards

In Mathematics, the standards focus on the importance of ensuring that all students master strong foundational skills to ensure that all students can access higher level mathematical coursework and concepts. The standards emphasize that students should not only be allowed to accelerate their learning but encouraged to explore various pathways to apply mathematical skills in other contexts and in real-world applications. The standards ensure that all Virginia students will master mathematical content and graduates high school with the knowledge and skills to compete in the workforce of the future.

3. English Language Arts Standards

As the Board prepares to review and revise the English and Language Arts Standards of Learning, it will focus on evidence-based literacy foundational instruction and the evidence-based reading research that is grounded in brain science, as required by the Virginia Literacy Act. Second, like mathematics, the standards will provide a pathway for high school students to engage in rigorous coursework that prepares them for college, career, and life. These components of the will be grounded in creating a student who can navigate complex texts, use all forms of literacy to engage fully in their world (listening, reading, writing, and speaking), and allow for students to accelerate their learning to be college and career ready.

4. Computer Science Standards

Lastly, the Computer Science Standards of Learning were revised and reviewed in first reading during 2023. These standards have focused on key concepts will be around emerging technologies and ensuring that our students are prepared for the workforce of the future and are able to compete on a global scale in industries yet to be developed. In addition, the standards will follow protocols and recommendations in the Governor's Executive Order 5. The standards have incorporated clear expectations on appropriate use of AI and how young people can be the leaders in this industry as this field is growing and changing rapidly.

B. Accreditation and Accountability Revision

In Fall of 2002, the Board began discussing a revision to Virginia's current accreditation and accountability systems following the publication of [Our Commitment to Virginians](#) and the release of the 2022 Nation's Report Card. These reports showed the Board that Virginia's students are experiencing declines in both reading and mathematics performance and that the current accreditation system was not adequately setting high expectations for schools and students. In response, the Board has held a series of work sessions where it explored Virginia's current accountability system and its difficulties addressing the challenges experienced by students since the pandemic. The work sessions included presentations and discussions with national accountability experts. Additionally, during the summer of 2023, Superintendent Coons conducted a series of meetings with stakeholder groups on revisions to the accountability system. During those sessions, three themes surfaced: achievement, student growth, and career readiness.

At a special meeting in August 2023, the Board reviewed and discussed options for a new achievement indicator, the measurement of growth, readiness indicators, and the overall accountability system. The purpose of this discussion was to provide VDOE with direction as the regulatory process began. The options for each included the following:

- Achievement: Pure proficiency and achievement index measures
- Growth: [Virginia's Visualization and Analytics Solution](#) ("VVAAS")
- Readiness: Chronic absenteeism, early literacy, proficiency in advanced mathematics, and college and career readiness measures

During the August meeting, the Board approved a Notice of Intended Regulatory Action to revise [8VAC20-131](#), which formally started the process for revising the accountability model and increasing transparency on school performance. Then, at the September Board meeting, the Board

voted to move forward with the achievement index measure, readiness measure (chronic absenteeism and college and career readiness), and a summative measure. These key decisions will provide VDOE with the bearing points to begin drafting the proposed regulations. Additionally, the new assessment system, based on the October recommendations from the House Bill 585 Working Group, will be vital to the achievement and growth measures in this new accountability system.

During the winter of 2023 and spring of 2024, the Board will conduct extensive stakeholder engagement activities to gather input from educators, school leaders, families, and the business community, as well as many other stakeholders. The 2023 and 2024 statewide listening sessions will allow diverse stakeholders opportunities to share what they think will allow for a clear and actionable system. The input from these stakeholder activities will inform the development of proposed regulations throughout 2024, with anticipated regulatory approval in the Fall of 2024.

C. College Partnership Laboratory Schools

In June 2023, the Board approved the first college partnership laboratory school (“lab school”) application it has ever received. As of October, two additional lab school applicants—the University of Mary Washington’s Academy of Technology and Innovation and Germana Community College’s Future Educators Academy—have advanced through the review process established by the Board’s College Partnership Laboratory Schools Standing Committee and are anticipated to be reviewed by the Board in December. Three additional institutes of higher education—George Mason University, James Madison University, and Mountain Gateway Community College—have submitted applications and will be reviewed by the Board in early January 2024.

Five additional applicants are expected to submit their application to VDOE by the end of the calendar year: Emory and Henry, ODU (Newport News), Ferrum, University of Virginia, and Eastern Shore Community College. Over \$3 million of the \$5 million allocated for planning grant funding has been awarded to 18 planning grant applicants. An additional planning grant was submitted from George Mason University last week and is in review. VDOE provides coaching to planning grant awardees as they work toward application submission, including to the following awardees: Lynchburg University, ODU (Chesapeake), Virginia Union University, Norfolk State, Central Virginia Community College, Piedmont Virginia Community College, and Roanoke College.

Regional on-site visits will be scheduled to provide real-time technical assistance and application support to concentrate efforts and maximize efficiency in consideration of the need for Board approval. Lab School Status		
Approved	Submitted for Approval	In Process of Review
VCUxCodeRVA		

IV. Appendices

A. Constitutional and Statutory Requirements

B. Summary of Compliance and Non-Compliance with the Standards of Quality for 2022–2023

C. School Divisions Reporting Full Compliance with the Standards of Quality for 2022–2023

D. School Divisions Reporting Noncompliance with One or More Provisions of the Standards of Quality (SOQ) for 2022–2023

E. Charter School Report and Information on Parent and Student Option

F. Analysis of School Division Report Requirements

G. Status Report Regarding Multidivision Online Providers

H. Virtual Virginia Report



The Virginia Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political affiliation, or against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. The policy permits appropriate employment preferences for veterans and specifically prohibits discrimination against veterans.

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