



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

September 16, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS)-Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Alternative Assessment Workshop - October 20, 2016**

The Virginia Association of School Superintendents and the Virginia Department of Education are providing Virginia teachers and administrators with a hands-on workshop to critique and review locally developed performance-based assessments (PBA's). The workshop, which will be conducted by Jay McTighe and Chris Gareis at the Williamsburg Doubletree Hotel on October 20, differs from the September 26 VDOE-Jobs for the Future's (JFF) Conference on "Assessing for Deeper Learning" ([Superintendent's Memo #185-16](#)) in the following ways:

1. The October 20 workshop is a hands-on workshop. Participants will be collaborating in small groups to critique and review sample PBA's developed by the Virginia School-University Partnership (VSUP) as well as those developed in their school divisions and classrooms.
2. The workshop is focused on the classroom and school level, rather than the division level, as it addresses the process of developing rubrics and calibrating scores in an effort to help teachers to make sound instructional decisions.
3. The workshop is for both teachers and administrators who want to move to the **next level** of understanding of how to develop and use quality assessments to make sound instructional decisions. Chris Gareis will provide a deeper look into the Assessment Framework 101 that he presents on September 26.

During the workshop, Jay McTighe and Chris Gareis will:

- introduce a peer critique protocol for reviewing and critiquing PBA's and then guide participants working collaboratively in small groups through the use of the protocol as they review and critique sample PBA's;
- circulate, assist and provide **feedback** to peer groups as they use the protocol to review and revise PBA's which they have developed in their school divisions and classrooms (or sample PBA's which will be provided to participants); and
- provide an overview of the calibration process for scoring PBA's, which will be explored further with additional hands-on experiences during the follow-up Alternative Assessment Workshop that will be held on January 18, 2017, at the Hilton Short Pump, Richmond.

In addition, Virginia Department of Education staff will share the current status and future direction of the state's alternative assessment initiative including ideas on how schools and divisions will be held accountable for results.

Please share this information and the workshop registration link with your teachers and administrators:

<http://www.vassonline.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=280>

SRS/SMC/jm

Attachments:

- A. [Expanding the Understanding, Development, & Use of Alternative Assessments in the Classroom](#)  
(Word)