



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

July 24, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Release of July 1, 2014 School-age Population Estimates Used to Distribute Fiscal Year 2017 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, 2014, school-age population estimates. These estimates will be used in calculating the fiscal year 2017 sales tax revenue distribution estimates to school divisions for the Governor's introduced 2016-2018 biennial budget, to be released in December 2015, and covering fiscal years 2017 and 2018. The school-age population estimates that will be released in July 2016 will be the final estimates used in calculating the fiscal year 2018 sales tax distribution. Local funding distributions based on the July 1, 2014, school-age population estimates will not be released until the Governor's budget release in December, 2015. Please note that the distribution of actual sales tax receipts to school divisions on a semi-monthly basis in fiscal year 2017 will be based on this same school-age estimate population data.

The sales tax revenue distribution for fiscal year 2016 will continue to be based on the previously released July 1, 2013, school-age population estimates; please see [Superintendent's Memo No. 186-14](#) for more information.

Weldon Cooper Center School-Age Population Estimates as of July 1, 2014

A data file containing the July 1, 2014, school-age population estimate for each division (including the special education child 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 Web site at: <http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/school-age-population-estimates>. The availability of the estimates was 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, 2014, utilize U.S. Census Bureau population estimates as of July 1, 2014, with adjustments, as required by the *Code*, 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 Department of Education added the number of special education students (ages 2 through 4 and 20 through 21) as reported on the December 1, 2014, special education child count, to the Weldon Cooper Center's estimates. The Weldon Cooper Center provides a full description of their estimation methodology on their Web site as indicated above.

Weldon Cooper Center Review Process

The July 1, 2014, school-age population estimates are open to review and inquiry until September 30, 2015. 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 Web site at:

<http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/school-age-population-estimates>.

School divisions and localities are encouraged to carefully review year-over-year variances in their local estimates, based on the two years of data provided in the Excel file available on the Weldon Cooper Center Web site.

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 are submitted by the conclusion of the process on September 30, 2015. After this date, the estimates will be considered final and will be used in fiscal year 2017 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
e-mail: hamilton.lombard@virginia.edu

SRS/cwd