



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

July 11, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: 2014 General Assembly Revisions to the Standards of Quality

The 2014 General Assembly revised Standards One, Three, and Four of the *Standards of Quality* (SOQ), §§ [22.1-253.13:1](#) through [22.1-253.13:9](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, and added a new Tenth Standard, § [22.1-253.13:10](#). These changes became law effective July 1, 2014.

Revisions to Standard One (§ [22.1-253.13:1](#))

1. [HB 886](#) amends this standard to require the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to disseminate to each public high school and each institution of higher education in the Commonwealth for which the Council has student-level data a link on its Web site to certain published postsecondary education and employment data. The bill requires each institution of higher education to publish the link on its Web site and each school board to provide annual notice on its Web site to enrolled high school students and their parents of the availability of such data.
2. [SB 270](#) directs the Board of Education (Board) to require only mathematics and English reading *Standards of Learning* (SOL) assessments for third graders. (Note: SB 270 is a Section One bill; therefore, its language will appear only in the 2014 Acts of Assembly and does not appear in the statute).

Revisions to Standard Three (§ [22.1-253.13:3](#))

1. [HB 930](#) and identical [SB 306](#) amend this standard to require that the number and type of (SOL) assessments shall not exceed 17 specified assessments in grades three through eight: reading and mathematics in grades three through eight; science in grades five and eight; writing in grade eight; and Virginia Studies and Civics and Economics once each at the grade levels deemed appropriate by each school board. There are no changes to the SOL end-of-course assessments. The bills require each school board to certify that it has provided instruction and administered an alternative assessment, in conformance with the Board's guidelines, for each subject area in which the SOL assessment was not administered. The bills require that such guidelines (1) incorporate options for age-appropriate, authentic performance assessments and portfolios with rubrics and other methodologies designed to ensure that students are making adequate academic progress in the subject area and that the SOL content is being taught; (2) permit and encourage integrated assessments that include multiple subject areas; and (3) emphasize collaboration between teachers to administer and substantiate the assessments and the professional development of teachers to enable them to make the best use of alternative assessments. Finally, the bills require the Secretary of Education to establish the SOL Innovation Committee to review the SOL and assessments periodically.

2. [HB 1007](#) replaces references to a General Education Development (GED) program or test throughout the *Code of Virginia* with "a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board."

Revisions to Standard Four (§ [22.1-253.13:4](#))

1. [HB 1054](#) provides that, in establishing course and credit requirements for a high school diploma, the Board shall consider all computer science course credits earned by students to be science course credits, mathematics course credits, or career and technical education credits. The bill also requires the Board to develop guidelines addressing how computer science courses can satisfy graduation requirements.
2. [HB 1007](#) replaces references to a GED program or test throughout the *Code of Virginia* with "a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board."

Additional Standard (§ [22.1-253.13:10](#))

[HB 930](#) and identical [SB 306](#) add a tenth standard to establish the SOL Innovation Committee to “periodically make recommendations to the Board of Education and the General Assembly on (a) the Standards of Learning assessments, (b) authentic individual student growth measures, (c) alignment between the Standards of Learning and assessments and the School Performance Report Card, and (d) ideas on innovative teaching in the classroom.”

For more information, please see:

- [Attachment A](#) for the full text of the 2014 *Standards of Quality* (with the changes effective July 1, 2014 highlighted).
- The *Standards of Quality* in the *Code of Virginia* at <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?000+cod+TOC2201000001300002000000>
- The final legislative report for the 2014 General Assembly session at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/legislation/>
- The Superintendent’s Memorandum summarizing 2014 legislation impacting public education at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2014/132-14.shtml
- If you have questions about this information, you may contact the Office of Policy at (804) 225-2092 or policy@doe.virginia.gov.

SRS/SBW/kfg

Attachment:

- A. [2014 Standards of Quality](#) (PDF)