COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

September 12, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Update to Test Blueprint for the Grade 6 Mathematics Standards of Learning Test

As stated in Superintendent's Memo No. 189-14, dated July 18, 2014, the Standards of Learning (SOL) online grade 6 mathematics test will be administered using a computer adaptive testing (CAT) format during the 2014-2015 school year. As a reminder, computer adaptive testing provides a customized assessment for each student based on how the student responds to the questions. This is in contrast to the traditional test format that has been used in the Standards of Learning (SOL) testing program for a number of years. In the traditional test format, each student who takes a particular test is administered one of several versions of the test. All students who take that particular version of the test respond to the same test questions.

In preparation for implementation of CAT, an updated mathematics test blueprint has been posted to the Virginia Department of Education Web site at the following link:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/mathematics/index.shtml. The updated testing blueprint contains information for the computer adaptive format of the test as well as the traditional format of the test. Because CAT customizes the test items for each student, the CAT version of the grade 6 mathematics test requires fewer items to determine the achievement level of the student. The CAT version of the grade 6 mathematics test contains five fewer operational items and two fewer field test items than the traditional format of the test. The number of items in each reporting category and the number of field test items on the test for the traditional format of the test remains unchanged from the previous version of the testing blueprint.

All online versions of the grade 6 mathematics test will be computer adaptive beginning in fall 2014 except for the online Plain English version which will be presented in the traditional format. The Plain English version of the test will be computer adaptive beginning in spring 2015. All paper versions of the test (including Plain English, large print, and Braille) will also be administered using the traditional format.

Should you have any questions, please contact the student assessment staff by e-mail at
Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov or by phone at (804) 225-2102.

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