



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

January 17, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Passing Scores Adopted by the Board of Education for the New End-of-Course Science Tests Based on the 2010 Standards of Learning

On January 10, 2013, the Virginia Board of Education adopted passing scores for the new end-of-course (EOC) science tests that measure the 2010 Standards of Learning (SOL). New “cut scores,” which are expressed in the number of items a student must answer correctly to achieve a certain level of proficiency, were adopted for the achievement levels of *pass/proficient* and *pass/advanced*. The cut scores for each of the new end-of-course science tests are shown below:

Test	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Earth Science	25 out of 50	45 out of 50
Biology	27 out of 50	45 out of 50
Chemistry	25 out of 50	44 out of 50

These cut scores have been communicated to Pearson, Virginia’s testing contractor, so that the work necessary to implement these cut scores and report the results of the new end-of-course science tests administered in fall 2012 can begin. Student level results for the new science tests administered in fall 2012 should be available no later than mid-February 2013. It is important to remember that the cut scores listed above apply only to the test forms that were reviewed by the standard setting committees. Other forms of the end-of-course science test will be statistically equated to the “standard setting” test form to ensure that the same level of achievement is required of all students taking a test for a particular course. As a result of the equating process, the number of items a student is required to answer correctly for a particular level may fluctuate slightly.

In addition, please note that these passing scores are applicable only to the new end-of-course science tests that measure the full implementation of the 2010 science content standards. Students who took a science course before fall 2012 and who are now retaking the associated end-of-course test for verified credit will continue to

take the test that measures the 2003 science standards. The cut scores on this test are unaffected by the Board's action.

If you have questions, please contact the student assessment staff at Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 225-2102.

PIW/SLR/aw