# Superintendent’s Memo #025-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: January 25, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: *Guidelines for Local Alternative Assessments for 2018-2019 through 2019-2020*

On January 24, 2019, the Virginia Board of Education adopted *Guidelines for Local Alternative Assessments for 2018-2019 through 2019-2020* to provide guidance to school division staff regarding continued implementation of local alternative assessments for Grade 3 Science, Grade 3 History, Grade 5 Writing, United States History to 1865, and United States History: 1865 to the Present. As a reminder, legislation passed by the 2014 Virginia General Assembly eliminated the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in the content areas listed above and required school divisions to administer local alternative assessments, consistent with Virginia Board of Education guidelines, to students in each of these content areas.

The new *Guidelines for Local Alternative Assessments for 2018-2019 through 2019-2020* found in Attachment A replace the *Local Alternative Assessment Guidelines for 2016-2017 through 2018-2019* adopted by the Board in October 2016. The updated guidelines clarify the expectation that divisions are to continue the implementation of performance assessments, emphasizing the use of the *Virginia Quality Criteria Tool for Performance Assessments* and common rubrics developed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to achieve consistent expectations for Virginia students.

Resources to support the development and use of performance assessments are located on the VDOE web page for [Performance Assessments and Local Alternative Assessments](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/local_assessments/index.shtml). Recent additions to this page include common rubrics and professional development materials used during the Performance Assessment Assurances: Next Steps for Leading Deeper Learning in Virginia conference. New resources will be added to this web page as they are finalized. Please note that documents and resources related to performance assessments used to verify credits in writing are located on the Standards of Learning and Testing web page for [English](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml), within the table titled “Standards of Learning Documents for English – Adopted 2017,” under the column heading “Resources for Instruction and Assessment.”

If you have questions about the new local alternative assessment guidelines, please contact the Department of Student Assessment and ESEA Programs at student\_assessment@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 225-2102 or the Department of Learning at instruction@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 225-2034.

JFL/SLR/sw

Attachment:

A. *Guidelines for Local Alternative Assessments for 2018-2019 through 2019-2020* (Word)