# Superintendent’s Memo #127-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: May 31, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: Opportunity to Comment on an Amendment to Virginia’s *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) State Plan

The Virginia Department of Education is seeking input on an amendment to its [ESSA State Plan](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/essa/essa-state-plan.pdf). The proposed changes are summarized below. If approved, accountability changes would be implemented beginning with the accountability ratings for the 2019-2020 school year.

Graduation Rate

The Federal Graduation Indicator (FGI) is currently calculated using the previous year’s cohort data. Under ESSA, states are no longer required to identify schools for support and improvement prior to the beginning of the school year. This more flexible timeline permits Virginia to use the current year’s cohort data to calculate the FGI. The amendment proposes to use current year data for this calculation; no changes to the targets are proposed.

Mathematics Targets

In accordance with Virginia’s standards and assessment review schedule, new Standards of Learning mathematics tests are being administered this year. Revised federal mathematics targets will be established this summer once statewide data are available. The new targets must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for review and approval. No changes to the methodology for establishing the targets are proposed.

Title II, Part A, Use of State Set-Aside Funds

In the coming months, the Board of Education will consider revisions to the teacher performance standards and evaluation criteria. The amendment proposes to use Title II, Part A, state level set-aside funds to support training and technical assistance to school divisions on upcoming revisions to the teacher evaluation system. This use of funds is proposed as an addition to initiatives that are currently supported with Title II, Part A, state level set-aside funds.

The Department welcomes comments on this amendment. Comments may be submitted electronically by Friday, July 26, 2019, to ESSA@doe.virginia.gov. Comments may also be presented in person during the Board of Education Business Meetings on Thursday, June 20, 2019, and on Thursday, July 25, 2019. The meetings will convene at 9:00 a.m. in the Jefferson Conference Room, 22nd floor, James Monroe Building, 101 N. 14th Street, Richmond, Virginia. Speakers intending to present comment are encouraged to contact Sonya Broady, Secretary, Office of Board Relations, at sonya.broady@doe.virginia.gov to be placed on the speaker list.

Questions regarding Virginia’s ESSA State Plan may be submitted to ESSA@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/ls

### **Links:**

* [*Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA)](https://legcounsel.house.gov/Comps/Elementary%20And%20Secondary%20Education%20Act%20Of%201965.pdf)
* [Virginia’s ESSA State Plan](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/essa/essa-state-plan.pdf)