# Superintendent’s Memo #194-20

[](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/index.shtml)  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: July 31, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: Updates to the *Understand Scoring* Application

In preparation for the 2020-2021 school year, the [*Understand Scoring*](https://va.scoring.pearsonassessments.com/understandscoring/) application has been reset. All user accounts and scores on practice sets and verification sets have been removed. To practice scoring, teachers must use the keyword “Virginia” to create a new user account. Depending on the web browser used to access *Understand Scoring*, it may be necessary to enable pop-up windows or disable a pop-up blocker.

For those not familiar with Understand Scoring, the application provides educators with information about Virginia’s writing assessments, including the rubrics and anchor papers that illustrate each score point on the Composing/Written Expression and Usage/Mechanics domains used to score the short-paper component of the Grade 8 and End-of-Course SOL writing test and the Local Performance Assessment to Verify Credits in Writing. The rubrics and anchor sets for the local alternative assessments in Grade 5 Writing will be updated fall 2020.

Users will be able to score papers in multiple practice sets and verification sets and view scoring based on Virginia's two-domain scoring rubric. Teachers will gain a better understanding of the Virginia writing assessments, understand the use of the rubrics in scoring student writing, and develop consistency in scoring papers written by Virginia students.

Teachers may also use Understand Scoring with students to facilitate their understanding of the expectations in each of the domains. Guest user functionality is available in the application and was designed specifically to allow students to access the system without having to create an account or save information.

For further information, please contact Jill Nogueras, Coordinator of English, Office of Humanities, at [Jill.Noguera@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Jill.Noguera@doe.virginia.gov) or (804) 225-2227; or the student assessment staff at [Student\_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov) or (804) 225-2102.