# Superintendent’s Memo #198-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: August 4, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: Information Concerning 2021-2022 Accreditation Ratings

On August 4, 2020, Dr. Lane exercised emergency authority granted to him by the 2020 General Assembly to waive annual school accreditation for 2021-2022 based on data from the 2020- 2021 academic year. Schools will be assigned a rating of “Accreditation Waived,” the same rating assigned schools for 2020-2021 under a waiver issued in April. The decision to waive accreditation for 2021-2022 is due, in part, to the fact that without Spring 2020 assessment information, there will be insufficient data to calculate growth in reading and mathematics.

Waiving accreditation for 2021-2022 will allow schools to focus on assessing the impact of the school closures on students both academically and on their social and emotional well-being. Schools will also be able to focus on a plan for resuming in-person instruction that allows for the prioritization of the health and well-being of students and staff, without the added pressure of the possible impact on accreditation. When tests are administered during the upcoming school year, those results will be used to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on student learning as well as a means to establish a new baseline for measuring student growth.

This decision is supported by the recommendation of the Accreditation Task Force which recommended that Dr. Lane waive accreditation in 2021-2022. The task force’s complete report can be found in the [Recover, Redesign, and Restart 2020 guidance document](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/covid-19/recover-redesign-restart-2020.pdf).

The Virginia Department of Education’s Office of School Quality will continue to support schools implementing improvement plans based on their 2019-2020 accreditation ratings.

Questions regarding school accreditation ratings may be submitted to Accountability@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/JM/as