# Superintendent’s Memo #298-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: November 6, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: Additional Details regarding Standards of Learning (SOL) Testing in 2020-2021

The purpose of this memo is to share additional details regarding Standards of Learning (SOL) testing in the 2020-2021 school year. As previously announced in a [press release](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/news/news_releases/2020/08-04-20-accreditation-waiver.docx) dated August 4, 2020, annual school accreditation has been waived for the 2021-2022 school year. It is important to note that this waiver does not affect requirements for standardized testing for the 2020-2021 school year. The Virginia Department of Education anticipates at this time that SOL tests scheduled for the 2020-2021 school year will be administered.

As local plans are developed for administering SOL tests to students in 2020-2021, school divisions must consider that all SOL tests are to be administered under secure, standardized testing conditions in the presence of school personnel. SOL tests are not to be administered remotely to students in a virtual school environment. When students complete an SOL test at school, all local requirements for the use of personal protective equipment and social distancing within the school must also be followed.

**Test Administration Schedule: Fall 2020 SOL Writing Tests**

At the request of school divisions, the length of the Fall 2020 SOL Writing Test Administration has been extended. The following dates apply:

| **Fall 2020 Grade 8 and End-of-Course (EOC) Writing SOL Tests** | **Dates** |
| --- | --- |
| Paper Test Window1: | October 19 – December 18, 2020 |
| Grade 8 and EOC Online Test Window1: | October 19 – December 18, 2020 |
| Term Graduate 1st Online Test Attempt Window2: | October 19 – October 30, 2020 |
| Term Graduate 2nd Online Test Attempt Window2: | November 16 – December 18, 2020 |

1 School divisions are to identify a three-week window within this window to complete paper and online testing. Flexibility to revise the selected weeks will be provided.

2 Term graduate students may complete one attempt in the first window and await the score before a second attempt or may complete both attempts in either window prior to receiving a first attempt score.

**Test Administration Schedule: Fall 2020 SOL Non-Writing Tests**

At the request of school divisions, the Fall 2020 SOL Non-Writing Test Administration was opened early for the administration of SOL tests in reading, mathematics, science, and history. Please note, however, that SOL test results will not be available prior to November 30, 2020.

| **Fall 2020 SOL Non-Writing Tests** | **Dates** |
| --- | --- |
| Test Window1 | October 26, 2020 – February 19, 2021 |
| Test Results begin to be Available | November 30, 2020 |

1 School divisions are to identify a three-week window within this window to complete paper and online testing. Flexibility to revise the selected weeks will be provided.

**Additional Fall 2020 Test Administration Details**

In the event a student is scheduled to take one or more SOL tests in fall 2020 and parents refuse to have the student participate or the student refuses to participate in the test due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a refusal (i.e., testing status 50 or 51) is not to be recorded and a “0” score will not be assigned to the student’s test. If the student was scheduled to a take an end-of-course SOL test, school division staff are encouraged to communicate with the parents and student regarding the student’s graduation requirements and future plans to attempt to earn the needed verified credit (i.e., future spring, summer, or fall SOL test administrations; a Board-approved substitute test). School divisions are encouraged to maintain a local record of refusals that are due to the COVID-19 pandemic so that an opportunity to test in spring 2021 can be offered. Additional details will be forthcoming to Division Directors of Testing regarding how student test records for those who do not complete an SOL test due to the COVID-19 pandemic will be coded in spring 2021.

To maximize flexibility due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of test administration options are available for school divisions to consider regarding SOL tests in fall 2020:

* SOL Writing tests only: For students with a documented need to complete a paper test, school divisions may plan to administer the short-paper component and the multiple-choice component as needed throughout the three-week test window. This flexibility already exists for Writing tests administered online.
* SOL Writing tests only: For students taking either online or paper tests, while it is not a best practice to administer both Writing test components on the same day, a school division may if parents agree.
* For any SOL test scheduled to be administered in fall 2020, school divisions have the option to delay administering the test until spring 2021. However, if students request to complete their end-of-course SOL test in fall 2020, those students are to be provided the opportunity to complete the test prior to the end of the fall test administration.
* For an end-of-course SOL test that is not required for federal accountability, school divisions may offer a Board-approved substitute test for verified credit in lieu of offering the end-of-course SOL test.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact student assessment staff at student\_assessment@doe.viginia.gov or (804) 225-2102.

JFL/SLR/as