



#246-22

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #246-22**

DATE: October 21, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Mathematics, Self-Regulation, Social Skills, and Mental Health Assessments
Pilot: Grades 1-3**

As required by the 2022-2024 biennial budget, the [Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program \(VKRP\)](#), through a partnership between the University of Virginia's Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning and the [Virginia Department of Education \(VDOE\)](#), is piloting longitudinal measures of mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health for children in grades 1-3. This memo provides information on the pilot's goals and what school divisions should expect to take place in the 2022-2023 school year.

School and division leaders, teachers, and families across Virginia have expressed interest in understanding how young students are learning and developing in the early elementary grades and how to better track student growth from pre-kindergarten through the early grades. However, apart from literacy, there are no statewide assessments that measure students' early learning in these areas in grades 1 and 2. Additionally, there are no statewide assessments that track students' within year and year-to-year growth in these areas (noting that there are growth assessments in mathematics starting in grade 3).

[Item 129H.f](#) of the 2022-2024 biennial budget requires the VKRP team, in collaboration with VDOE, to conduct a mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health assessment pilot for grades 1-3. These measures complement Virginia's long standing use of literacy

screening in the primary grades (PALS) and the [Virginia Literacy Partnership's](#) (VLP) revision of Virginia's statewide literacy screening system. The pilot will be implemented in the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. At the conclusion of the pilot, VKRP will submit a report with detailed findings to the General Assembly.

The goals of the pilot are to:

- 1) Gather information about existing assessments to learn what types of measures are currently being used in school divisions to understand students' development and learning in the early grades;
- 2) Engage families, teachers, and school, division, and state leaders to gain their perspectives on gaps in data on students' mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health and determine where strong data already exist in the early elementary grades; and
- 3) In collaboration with Virginia Literacy Partnership, pilot items in grades 1-3 in a subset of school divisions that could potentially be used as part of a statewide suite of assessments to better understand student progress in mathematics, social skills, self-regulation, and mental health.

The timeline for the project is detailed below. See the *Mathematics, Self-Regulation, Social Skills, and Mental Health Assessments Pilot: Grades 1-3* [one-pager](#) for additional information.

2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gather information from stakeholders, including subject matter experts• Develop and pilot items
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2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to pilot items and assessments• Gather feedback• Provide report of findings to VDOE
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Divisions will receive updates on each phase of the pilot, including details on how to engage in pilot efforts, via subsequent Superintendent's Memos.

For more information

Visit vkrponline.org to learn more about VKRP. Contact Wanda Weaver at (434) 924-5425 or vkrp@virginia.edu for questions about the Pilot. For more general inquiries on VKRP as the state's readiness assessment system, contact Dr. Tamiyah Richardson, Director of Early Childhood Learning, at Tamiyah.Richardson@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-4781.

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