| **Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item** | **Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia** |
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# Agenda Item: D

## Date: April 25, 2019

### Title: Final Review of Proposal to Include a Multiple Races Student Group in State Accreditation

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## Purpose of Presentation:

Action required by Board of Education regulation.

## Executive Summary: Virginia Department of Education guidelines indicate that any student groups comprising five percent or more of the annual student enrollment should be considered in accountability models. In the 2018-2019 school year, students identifying as two or more races (non-Hispanic) comprised 5.7 percent of all students enrolled. Students identifying as two or more races are currently only counted in the “All Students” student group for state accreditation. The Department recommends adding a “Multiple Races” student group to state accreditation beginning in the 2020-2021 school year to include students who identify as two or more races, affecting indicators of academic achievement gaps in English and academic achievement gaps in mathematics.

## Since first review in March 2019, the timeline for implementation of the Multiple Races student group in state accreditation is extended until the 2020-2021 school year, based on assessments administered during the 2019-2020 school year.

## Action Requested:

Final review: Action requested at this meeting.

## Superintendent’s Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the inclusion of a multiple races student group in state accreditation.

## Rationale for Action:

Students identifying as more than one race now exceed the Department’s threshold of five percent of enrollment to be considered a major race or ethnic student group in state accreditation. Adding a Multiple Races student group in accountability ensures the Department considers the achievement and engagement of this growing population of students when determining the effectiveness of schools.

This recommendation aligns with Priority 1 of the Board’s 2018-2023 Comprehensive Plan to provide high quality, effective learning environments for all students, and with the Board’s intent expressed during the revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation* to address gaps in academic achievement for all students.

## Previous Review or Action:

Previous review and action. Specify date and action taken below:

Date: March 21, 2019

Action: The Board received for first review the recommendation to include a Multiple Races student group in state accreditation.

## **Background Information and Statutory Authority:** The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (§8VAC20-131)* identifies six types of indicators for which schools are held accountable. One such type of indicator is academic achievement gaps, measured for English (reading and writing) and mathematics, and calculated as a composite of the difference between each reporting group’s performance and the state benchmark. In the regulations, reporting groups are defined as a “subgroup of students who are identified as having common characteristics such as: students identified as belonging to major racial and ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners.”

The Department of Education’s school accountability guidelines have included a long-standing definition of “major racial and ethnic groups” as comprising five percent or more of the annual student enrollment. At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, five racial and ethnic groups exceeded 5 percent of student enrollment: Asian students (7.1 percent); Black students (22.2 percent); Hispanic students (16.2 percent); White students (48.4 percent); and students identifying as two or more races (5.7 percent). Students identifying as two or more races are included in the “All Students” reporting group for all other academic and school quality indicators used for state accreditation, but are not listed as a separate reporting group for the achievement gap indicators in English (reading and writing) and mathematics.

The Department recommends including a “Multiple Races” student group in state accreditation. The “Multiple Races” student group, defined as students of two or more races that are not also Hispanic, would be added to the seven reporting groups currently examined for the achievement gap indicators, including Asian students, Black students, Hispanic students, White students, economically disadvantaged students, English learner students, and students with disabilities. The rules for applying performance levels to the Multiple Races student group would be the same as the current reporting groups, and the overall decision rules for determining the final performance level of the achievement gap indicators would also remain the same.

Data on student race and ethnicity are collected locally and reported to the Department through most student-level data collections. Implementing this recommendation would not require any additional data collection from schools or students. States and divisions are required to follow federal standards for collecting race and ethnicity, including the use of a two-question format which first asks students (or parents/guardians, if the child cannot self-report) if they are Hispanic and then to select one or more races from the following options: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; and White. Students identified as Hispanic are reported in the Hispanic student group only. Students not selecting Hispanic and selecting only one race are included in a single race group. Students not selecting Hispanic and selected any combination of two or more races are aggregated into a “two or more races” reporting group.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:  
Upon approval, school accreditation ratings for the 2020-2021 school year will reflect the performance of the Multiple Races student group in the English and mathematics achievement gap indicators, based on assessments administered in the 2019-2020 school year.

## Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

None.