



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Education**

DATE: September 21, 2018

TO: Division Superintendents

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

SUBJECT: Local Performance Assessments Used to Verify Credits in Writing in 2018-2019

The 2017 Standards of Accreditation (SOA) at 8VAC20-131-110 B5 permit local school divisions to award a verified credit in writing to a student who “meets the criteria for the receipt of a verified credit in English (writing) by demonstrating mastery of the content of the associated course on an authentic performance assessment, that complies with guidelines adopted by the board.” As required by the SOA, on September 20, 2018, the Virginia Board of Education approved **Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Award Verified Credits in Writing**.

As noted in the guidelines, students who will complete grade 11 English in the 2018-2019 school year or who have previously completed instruction in the Grades 9-11 English SOL have been taught the 2010 English Standards of Learning (SOL). Local performance assessments used to verify credits in writing for these students must measure the SOL included in the test blueprint for the end-of-course writing test found at

[http://doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/blueprints/english\\_blueprints/2010/2010\\_blueprint\\_eoc\\_writing.pdf](http://doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/blueprints/english_blueprints/2010/2010_blueprint_eoc_writing.pdf) and must include a persuasive writing sample. School divisions will score such writing samples using readers trained and qualified through the rubric and accompanying materials available at

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/english/2010/online\\_writing/index.shtml#understandscoring](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/2010/online_writing/index.shtml#understandscoring).

Students who are enrolled in grade 10 English or below in the 2018-2019 school year will be instructed primarily using the 2017 English SOL. School divisions that choose to award verified credits to these students in writing using authentic performance assessments must administer assessments that cover the writing and research standards included in the English SOL for grades 9-11. Writing assessments for these students must include persuasive, analytic, and argumentative writing samples, and student writing samples must be scored using the state-developed high school writing rubric by scorers who have been trained on the application of the rubric. A draft high school writing rubric based on the 2017 English SOL has been developed;

however, materials for training scorers on the application of the rubric will not be available until the late summer or early fall of 2019.

Scoring and training materials developed for the 2010 SOL end-of-course (EOC) test short paper component are available for use until the high school writing rubric is finalized. These materials are designed to be used with persuasive writing, so divisions that choose to award verified credits in writing to students enrolled in grade 10 English or below in the 2018-2019 school year should collect persuasive writing samples for all high school students who need a verified credit in writing. Students enrolled in grade 9 or 10 English in 2018-2019 will have an opportunity to complete argumentative and analytic writing samples in 2019-2020 and beyond. After the spring of 2019, the high school writing rubric and training materials based on the 2017 English SOL will be available to match the guidelines approved by the Board of Education on September 20, 2018.

Questions about the 2010 SOL EOC test persuasive writing rubric or the training materials available to support its use should be addressed to the student assessment staff at [student\\_assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at (804) 225-2102. Questions about writing tasks for use in students' work samples and the 2017 SOL high school writing rubric should be addressed to Jill Noguerras, English Coordinator, at [jill.noguerras@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:jill.noguerras@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at (804) 225-3696.

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