



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DATE: August 10, 2023

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Lisa Coons, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: **Change in the Fall 2023 Grades 3-8 Reading and Mathematics Virginia Growth Assessments**

This communication is to announce a change in the growth assessments to be administered to students in grades 3-8 reading and mathematics in fall 2023. **As a reminder, the growth assessments are required by legislation passed in the 2021 Virginia General Assembly and are to be completed by students in the fall and mid-year (or winter) in addition to the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests that are administered in the spring of the school year.**

The online computer adaptive growth assessments may include test items at, below, and above a student's grade level as appropriate for each student.

VIRGINIA GROWTH ASSESSMENT (VGA) CHANGE

In response to concerns about the growth assessments received from school division leaders and other stakeholders in the Commonwealth, VDOE leadership has directed the student assessment staff, in collaboration with our state assessment contractor Pearson, to revise the Fall 2023 Growth Assessments so that students will take assessments this fall that will primarily measure reading and mathematics content from the student's previous grade level. For example, students enrolled in grade 5 mathematics in fall 2023 will take growth assessments based on grade 4 mathematics content. This is a change from the fall 2022 growth assessments where students were assessed on reading and mathematics content primarily from their current grade level - content they had not yet been taught.

FOCUS ON FEEDBACK

The change in content measured by the fall 2023 growth assessments is intended to ensure that teachers, parents, and students receive feedback on how well a student has mastered content that may be needed for success in the coming school year and to identify areas where a student may need additional supports. For students taking the test online, the testing system can adapt with test questions that are one grade level above or one grade level below the student's previous grade level as appropriate for the student. The online tests for grade 3 and grade 4 reading and mathematics in fall 2023 will include test items primarily based on grade 3 and grade 2 content with items based on grade 4 content also available. Students who need a paper test will complete a test with all questions based on the student's prior grade level. Students enrolled in grade 3 and students enrolled in grade 4 completing a paper test will take the grade 3 paper growth assessment. The test blueprints for the revised Fall 2023 Reading and Mathematics Growth Assessments [will be available online on the Growth Assessment webpage on the VDOE website on Friday, August 11, 2023.](#)

Please be aware that the change in the content of the fall 2023 growth assessments will NOT impact the measurement of growth for the 2024-2025 accountability determinations based on data from 2023-2024.

To fully implement this change in the Fall 2023 Growth Assessments, the opening of the fall test administration has been delayed until Monday, August 14, 2023. Additional information regarding the details of the test administration will be shared with Division Directors of Testing (DDOTs) via a webinar hosted by the Office of Student Assessment on Thursday, August 10, 2023. Registration information for that webinar will be shared directly with DDOTs.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact the Office of Student Assessment at Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 225-2102.