



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

July 17, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Computer Adaptive Testing for Grades 7 and 8 Mathematics

[Superintendent's Memorandum No. 189-14](#) informed school divisions that the administration of the Grade 6 Mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) would begin during the 2014-2015 school year. Additional state funding will allow the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to also administer SOL CATs for Grades 7 and 8 mathematics during the 2015-2016 school year. The development of computer adaptive testing is part of the Department's continuing efforts to provide students with the best possible testing experience.

As a reminder, computer adaptive testing provides a customized assessment for each student rather than each student taking one of several different versions of a traditional test. A CAT selects the items administered to the student by scoring the student's response to a test item and selecting the next item based on the student's response. The process of choosing a test item, scoring the response, and selecting the next item to be administered is repeated throughout the test until the student completes the total number of required items.

Due to the addition of the Grades 7 and 8 mathematics CAT during the 2015-2016 school year, the [SOL Test Blueprints](#) for Grades 7 and 8 mathematics have been updated. The most significant change to the blueprints is that the test lengths will be less than the traditional versions of the tests. Each CAT will contain 45 operational items and 8 field test items, for a total test length of 53 items. As a reminder, the Grade 6 Mathematics Test Blueprint was updated last year, and [CAT Resources](#) were made available on the VDOE Web site to offer additional information about computer adaptive testing.

Please note that paper/pencil versions of the Grades 7 and 8 mathematics tests, along with the paper/pencil and online versions of the Grade 8 mathematics test associated with the 2001 Mathematics SOL (which is offered for students who have taken coursework associated with the 2001 standards and who need to meet the numeracy requirements for the Modified Standard Diploma), will continue to be offered in the traditional testing format.

Questions regarding this information should be directed to student assessment staff at Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 225-2102.

SRS/SLR/aw