



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education

July 17, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Guidelines for Determining the Federal Accountability Results of “Small n Schools”**

Under the provisions of Virginia’s approved application for waivers from certain requirements of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA), as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB), Virginia will use 30 students as the “minimum n” for purposes of calculating pass rates for federal accountability results and applying the 95 percent participation rate requirement at the state, division, and school levels for accountability results for the 2015-2016 school year (based on assessments administered in 2014-2015).

As in previous years, Virginia will continue to use the three most recent years of assessment data to automatically calculate the pass rate to determine if a “small n school” met the annual measurable objectives (AMOs). A “small n school” that meets the AMOs in reading and mathematics using this method will meet federal accountability requirements. Schools with a graduating class will also need to meet the federal graduation indicator. A “small n school” that does not meet the AMOs by using this method will be declared “To Be Determined” (TBD) on the preliminary federal accountability reports provided to school divisions.

Schools labeled TBD may submit a body of evidence to their school division for consideration. Based on the evidence submitted, the division superintendent will make a federal accountability determination for the school and forward that decision, with an explanation for its basis, to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) within one month of the school receiving notice of its federal accountability results but **no later than Friday, August 28, 2015**, for validation and inclusion in statewide data reports. The VDOE will consider the school division’s recommendation for the federal accountability determination of Title I schools, but ultimately it will make the final decision for Title I schools. If no evidence is submitted to the Department on behalf of a school by Friday, August 28, 2015, that school will not meet federal AMOs.

[Attachment A](#) contains guidelines that school divisions should follow in determining the federal accountability status for their “small n schools.” Please use [Attachment B](#) to submit the determination to the VDOE.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Christopher Kelly, education coordinator, at [AMOTBD@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:AMOTBD@doe.virginia.gov) or (804) 225-2122.

SRS/VT/ck

Attachments:

- A. [Guidelines for Determining the Federal Accountability Results of “Small n Schools”](#) (PDF)
- B. [Response Form for Determining the Federal Accountability Results of “Small n Schools”](#) (Word)

