



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

September 13, 2013

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: Virginia School Speed Test**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is asking the Commonwealth's public schools to participate in an October statewide test of Internet connection speeds. The goal is for each of the state's 1,867 public schools—and buildings housing regional and specialty educational programs—to conduct ten connection-speed tests during October. Tests should be administered over several days and should be performed at different times of the day.

The Virginia School Speed Test is an online application that measures bandwidth experienced by teachers and students. The test takes about one minute and documents upload speed, download speed, and the browser and operating system of the device used to complete the test. School divisions should designate an individual—such as a division technology director—to coordinate the testing and ensure that the tests are conducted in every school. Assigned testers in each building complete the tests by visiting the Virginia School Speed Test Web site at <http://partners.schoolspeedtest.org/virginia.html> and following the instructions.

Virginia is a national leader in providing Internet access to students for instruction and assessment. Since 2001, the Commonwealth has invested approximately \$760 million in infrastructure and hardware to create and maintain high-speed Internet connectivity in all schools and improve online instruction and testing capabilities.

The VDOE will use data from the October Internet connection speed tests to inform efforts to further improve Internet access for teachers and students. In addition, data from the tests will be shared with state technology agencies responsible for updating Virginia's Interactive Broadband Availability Map.

The Virginia School Speed Test is part of the National School Broadband Test organized by EducationSuperHighway, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving Internet access in schools nationwide.

For more information about the Virginia School Speed Test, contact Gail Warren, Project Coordinator, via e-mail at [gail.warren@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:gail.warren@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at (757) 470-3017.

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