



#095-22

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #095-22**

DATE: May 6, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Removal of the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator from Determination of Accreditation Status for the 2022-2023 Accreditation Year**

Chronic absenteeism, considered a measure of student engagement, is one of nine indicators in Virginia's school accreditation model. The performance level a school earns on the chronic absenteeism indicator is used in conjunction with the performance levels of the other indicators to determine a school's accreditation status.

Under normal circumstances, school divisions have control of the programs and school-level policies and procedures put into place to engage students in school. However, student absences during the 2021-2022 school year that resulted from the extraordinary circumstances created by COVID-19 may not necessarily be correlated to the school-level policies and procedures put into place. As such, the Virginia Board of Education, at the April 21, 2022 business meeting, exercised its authority under [8VAC20-131-380 F3](#) of the *Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA)* to adopt special provisions related to the use of a school quality indicator in determining the accreditation status of schools.

Specifically, the Board adopted special provisions to remove the chronic absenteeism indicator from the determination of school accreditation status for accreditation year 2022-2023 only. In doing so, the chronic absenteeism indicator performance level will not be a factor when determining a school's accreditation status. However, the earned performance

level and chronic absenteeism rate will still be calculated and reported by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Chronic absenteeism data will be available in the *Accreditation* and *Federal Accountability* applications in the Single Sign-on Web Systems (SSWS) to help schools as they prepare for the 2022-2023 school year as well as on the [School Quality Profiles](#) and in any other data reports (i.e., [School Accreditation Reports](#)) as normally provided by VDOE to ensure transparency of this information to all stakeholders in the community.

This flexibility is for one year only, and the use of chronic absenteeism in the determination of a school's accreditation status will resume in accreditation year 2023-2024, which will be based on the data from the 2022-2023 school year. Chronic absenteeism remains an important indicator of school engagement, and schools are expected to make every effort in the 2022-2023 school year to mitigate absenteeism in schools. There are multiple resources available on the Virginia Department of Education website, including [a 12 module training series](#) to help school division staff as they plan for and address absenteeism in schools.

For more information

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Amy Siepka, Director of Accountability, via e-mail at accountability@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at 804-225-2102.

JB/SLR/abs