



#033-21

Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo

DATE: February 5, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Development of a New Virginia Alternate Assessment Program**

As a result of peer review feedback from the United States Department of Education, Virginia was required to replace or redesign the current portfolio-based Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) and implement a new alternate assessment for eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in the 2021-2022 school year. In compliance with this requirement, the Department of Student Assessment, Accountability, and ESEA Programs and the Department of Special Education and Student Services at the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) have partnered with Behavioral Research & Teaching at the University of Oregon, the Oregon Department of Education, and our existing assessment contractor, Pearson, to develop and implement a new VAAP within the mandated timeline.

The new VAAP will be an online assessment in reading, mathematics, and science for eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3 through 8 and high school. Staff from the Office of Student Assessment and the Office of Instructional Services at the VDOE will introduce the new VAAP to school division staff and parents later this school year and will provide test administration training and assessment resources near the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year.

For more information

Questions on the development of the new VAAP may be directed to the Office of Student Assessment at (804) 225-2102 or Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov.

JFL/SLR/as