



For Immediate Release:
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96 Percent of Virginia Schools Meet SOL Standards *New Graduation & Completion Index Impacts High School Accreditation*

Ninety-six percent of Virginia’s 1,838 public schools are fully accredited and meeting all state standards for achievement in English, mathematics, history and science — and graduation, in the case of high schools — the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) announced today.

Ninety-eight percent of Virginia’s elementary schools and 97 percent of middle schools are fully accredited for the 2011-2012 school year, based on the performance of students on Standards of Learning (SOL) and other state assessments during 2010-2011.

The percentage of fully accredited high schools dropped to 86 percent, compared with 99 percent last year, as the Board of Education introduced a “graduation and completion index” as a new accountability factor for high schools, in addition to student achievement on state tests.

“Whenever standards are raised, there are schools that require time to meet the new expectations,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright said. “The fact that 86 percent of high schools already meet or exceed the standard for graduation and completion speaks to the efforts of educators and administrators to raise graduation rates,”

The index system awards full credit for students who earn a board-recognized diploma and partial credit for students who earn GEDs and local credentials, as well as for students who are still enrolled and expected to return for a fifth year of high school. High schools must have a graduation and completion index of at least 85 for full accreditation.

2011-2012 SOL Accreditation Ratings

Grade Span	Fully Accredited	Accredited with Warning	Provisionally Accredited	Conditional (New Schools)	Accreditation Denied	To Be Determined
Elementary	1,157	11	0	3	1	2
Middle	298	8	0	1	1	1
High	266	11	30	1	0	0
Combined	47	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,768 (96%)	30 (2%)	30 (2%)	5 (<1%)	2 (<1%)	3 (<1%)

“Holding high schools accountable for outcomes encourages early interventions before students are at risk of dropping out,” Board of Education President Eleanor B. Saslaw said. “It is a critical component of the board’s effort to ensure that Virginia graduates are college-and-career ready.”

In 30 provisionally accredited high schools, achievement in English, mathematics, history and science met state standards, and graduation was within five points of the 85-point benchmark. Ten of the 11 high schools accredited with warning for 2011-2012 are warned solely because of graduation and completion indices below this year’s 80-point benchmark for provisional accreditation. Provisional accreditation will not be available after 2015-2016.

(more)

In addition to high school-exit data, the accreditation ratings announced today are based on the achievement of students on SOL assessments and approved substitute tests in English, mathematics, history and science administered during the summer and fall of 2010 and the spring of 2011, or on overall achievement during the three most recent academic years. The results of tests administered in each subject area are combined to produce overall school passing percentages in English, mathematics, history and science.

In middle schools and high schools, a pass rate of at least 70 percent in all four subject areas is required for full accreditation. In elementary schools, a combined pass rate of at least 75 percent on English tests in grades 3-5 is required for full accreditation. Elementary schools also must achieve pass rates of at least 70 percent in mathematics, grade-5 science and grade-5 history, and pass rates of at least 50 percent in grade-3 science and grade-3 history.

Accreditation ratings also may reflect adjustments made for schools that successfully remediate students who failed reading or mathematics tests during the previous year. Adjustments also may be made for students with limited-English proficiency and for students who have recently transferred into a Virginia public school.

The percentage of schools earning full accreditation for 2011-2012 is two points lower than the percentage that earned the highest rating for 2010-2011. The state superintendent expects further declines in accreditation as schools implement more rigorous standards and tests in English and mathematics, starting with mathematics this year and followed by English during 2012-2013.

“Our schools will begin a new trend line as these more rigorous standards and assessments become effective,” Wright said. “But raising standards is the right thing to do and I am confident that our teachers and schools will rise to the challenge and Virginia students will be better prepared as a result.”

The number of schools accredited with warning rose to 30, compared with 15 last year. Two schools were denied accreditation this year because of chronically low student achievement:

- Peabody Middle in Petersburg for a sixth consecutive year; and
- Ellen W. Chambliss Elementary in Sussex County for a third consecutive year.

One school — J.E.B. Stuart Elementary in Petersburg — earned full accreditation for 2011-2012 after being denied accreditation for three consecutive years. Five newly opened schools are automatically rated as conditionally accredited for 2011-2012.

The status of three schools is expected to be determined by the Board of Education at its October meeting:

- Lafayette Winona Middle in Norfolk — which was denied accreditation last year — is seeking conditional accreditation based on the implementation of its reconstitution plan.
- Lindenwood Elementary in Norfolk and Kiptopeke Elementary in Northampton County — which were accredited with warning for a third consecutive year in 2010-2011 — are seeking conditional accreditation based on the strength of their proposed reconstitution plans.

Under Virginia’s SOL accountability program, a school that has been on academic warning for three consecutive years and fails to meet state standards for a fourth consecutive year can apply to the Board of Education for conditional accreditation — if the local school board agrees to reconstitute the school’s leadership, staff, governance or student population. A reconstituted school can retain conditional accreditation for up to three years if it is making acceptable progress toward meeting state standards.

(more)

In 97 of the commonwealth's 132 school divisions, all schools are fully accredited, compared with 119 last year. Divisions with all schools fully accredited (other than new schools that automatically receive conditional accreditation) are:

- Albemarle County
- Alleghany County
- Amelia County
- Amherst County
- Appomattox County
- Augusta County
- Bath County
- Bedford County
- Bland County
- Botetourt County
- Bristol
- Buchanan County
- Buckingham County
- Buena Vista
- Campbell County
- Caroline County
- Carroll County
- Charles City County
- Charlotte County
- Charlottesville
- Chesapeake
- Clarke County
- Colonial Beach
- Colonial Heights
- Craig County
- Culpeper County
- Cumberland County
- Danville
- Essex County
- Falls Church
- Fauquier County
- Floyd County
- Fluvanna County
- Franklin
- Franklin County
- Frederick County
- Fredericksburg
- Galax
- Gloucester County
- Goochland County
- Grayson County
- Greene County
- Greensville County
- Halifax County
- Hanover County
- Henry County
- Highland County
- Isle of Wight County
- King George County
- King William County
- Lancaster County
- Lee County
- Lexington
- Loudoun County
- Louisa County
- Madison County
- Manassas Park
- Martinsville
- Mathews County
- Mecklenburg County
- Middlesex County
- Montgomery County
- Nelson County
- New Kent County
- Norton
- Nottoway County
- Orange County
- Patrick County
- Pittsylvania County
- Poquoson
- Powhatan County
- Prince George County
- Pulaski County
- Radford
- Rappahannock County
- Richmond County
- Roanoke County
- Rockbridge County
- Rockingham County
- Russell County
- Salem
- Scott County
- Shenandoah County
- Smyth County
- Southampton County
- Spotsylvania County
- Stafford County
- Surry County
- Warren County
- Washington County
- Waynesboro
- West Point
- Williamsburg-James City County
- Winchester
- Wise County
- Wythe County
- York County

Updated [school report cards](#) and [accreditation ratings for 2011-2012](#) for all schools are available on the VDOE website.

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