**Assessment Modernization: Align Standards of Learning,**

**The Profile of a Graduate, and Virginia’s Assessment System**





Current Reality:

* The Board of Education (BOE) initiated an overhaul of the Accountability System in late 2023 with stated implementation for SY 25-26 but will apply the new system to report on schools for the current (SY 24-25) school year relying on data from the legacy Assessment System.
* The BOE intends to include constructed response and performance-based items in the assessment system based on a [eVA Request for Information - Virginia K-12 Assessment Program Management System](https://mvendor.cgieva.com/Vendor/public/IVDetails.jsp?PageTitle=SO%20Details&rfp_id_lot=74891&rfp_id_round=0) issued on August 26, 2024. However, Virginia’s contract with Pearson expires on 12/31/2024, and the contract deadline means that there is no time to:
	+ gather input from practitioners;
	+ examine available data from states that are using more modern assessment models, particularly in order to determine how well these models assess higher-level understanding and skills; or
	+ examine performance-based measures that have been used in school divisions over the past several years to determine whether they might be used as exemplars.
* Assessments currently administered to Virginia students, though adjustments have been made and technology applications have been integrated over the years, are quite similar to the original 1990’s model.  The RFI (linked above) released on August 26, 2024, to potential vendors, invites “innovative capabilities and offerings” and indicates that after responses are received at the end of September, the Department will choose a vendor, produce a detailed implementation plan, and request needed funding in time to be included in the Governor’s budget bill for the 2025 regular session. Though we understand and share the feeling of urgency to modernize the system, this timeline is unlikely to produce the results we need. A robust and careful procurement process is essential. We must use this opportunity to build a system that:
	+ provides valid tools and reliable data related to higher-level understanding and skills which are represented in the SOL and Profile of a Graduate, but which are not assessed with our current tools. *(note: current assessment items are all written “at the bullet level”)*
	+ generates the data needed for accountability measures, as well as timely and meaningful information to guide school improvement efforts.
	+ includes tasks that represent real-world challenges, requiring students to demonstrate knowledge and skills across content areas.
	+ leverages technology to decrease the need for restrictive testing schedules and security measures, supporting the need to move away from instruction/assessment cycles that are time-bound.

RCPS recommends the General Assembly:

* Support the implementation of the new Accountability System by providing time for the first iteration to be refined and support it with an extension of the flexibility provided to schools by the 2024 General Assembly; and
* Allow an extension of one additional year on Virginia’s contract with Pearson. Implement a robust and inclusive process for determining criteria and parameters describing a modernized assessment system.