Arlington Public Schools

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APS Strategic Plan
2024-30



Work Session on Assessment Changes

Lisa Pellegrino, Director Assessment Office

November 17, 2026

Overview of Assessment Changes

Timeframe School Year (SY)	Description	Reason for Change	Slide
2026–2027	New Cut Scores for Reading and Math Standards of Learning (SOL).	HB 299/SB 200	3–4
2026–2027	SOL testing within last two weeks of semester or school year for Grades 7–12. No changes to Grades 3–6.	HB 299/SB 200	5–7
2026–2027	Virginia Growth Assessment (VGA) is discontinued by VDOE. APS will continue local MAP Growth Assessment.	HB 299/SB 200	8
2026–2027	SAT School Day required to be offered to Grade 11 or Grade 12 students.	HB 410	9
2026–2027	WIDA Alternate ACCESS Exit Criteria for English Learner (EL) students.	VBOE Approval	10–11
2026–2027	New Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Family Portal for SOL Reports.	VDOE Update	12
2027–2028	New Science Local Alternative Assessment (LAA) option in Chemistry and Earth Science for Verified Credit.	HB 1763/SB 1247	13
2028–2029 Projected	Schools must include SOL results as at least 10% of student grades in Grades 7–12. VDOE to share more guidance.	HB 299/SB 200	14

New Reading and Math SOL Cut Scores

2026-2027 SOL Cut Scores for Reading and Math

- For most Reading and Math SOL assessments, a **score of 400** is no longer considered passing.
- A temporary **Pass/Approaching level** was introduced during the transition to higher cut scores.
- Students in the **Pass/Approaching** range are considered to be **passing** for graduation and school accountability.
- Full grade-level mastery is shown by **Pass/Proficient** or **Pass/Advanced**.

School Year 2026 – 2027 Proficiency Implementation Plan

Reading and Math

Virginia Department of Education

Reading Assessment Cut Scores: 2026 – 2027

Grade Level	Fail/Below Basic	Fail/Basic	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Grade 3	0-408	409-417	**418***-443	444-501	502-600
Grade 4	0-414	415-425	**426***-450	451-513	514-600
Grade 5	0-401	402-413	**414***-445	446-509	510-600
Grade 6	0-389	390-412	**413***-448	449-514	515-600
Grade 7	0-375	376-412	**413***-448	449-510	511-600
Grade 8	0-385	386-412	**413***-448	449-515	516-600

End of Course Reading Assessment Cut Scores: 2026 – 2027

Grade Level	Fail/Does Not Meet	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
EOC Reading	0-399	—	**400***-499	500-600

Math Assessment Cut Scores: 2026 – 2027

Grade Level	Fail/Below Basic	Fail/Basic	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Grade 3	0-375	376-409	**410***-442	443-520	521-600
Grade 4	0-383	384-410	**411***-444	445-517	518-600
Grade 5	0-378	379-410	**411***-444	445-510	511-600
Grade 6	0-379	380-407	**408***-432	433-506	507-600
Grade 7	0-387	388-407	**408***-429	430-507	508-600
Grade 8	0-387	388-407	**408***-429	430-502	503-600

End of Course Math Assessment Cut Scores: 2026 – 2027

Grade Level	Fail/Does Not Meet	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Algebra I	0-412	**413***-452	453-517	518-600
Geometry	0-412	**413***-451	452-509	510-600
Algebra II	0-410	**411***-442	443-504	505-600

*Note: Scale score in **bold with asterisks(*)** indicates the minimum score considered "passing" in the 2026-2027 school year. The dashes (—) indicate data is not applicable.*

EOC Reading SOL Cut Scores: 2028-2029

- The high school End-of-Course (EOC) **Reading SOL** is the state reading assessment typically administered in Grade 11.
- The new cut score will take effect in the **2028–2029** school year.

End of Course (EOC) Reading

Year	Fail/Does Not Meet	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
2025-2026	0-399	—	**400***-499	500-600
2026-2027	0-399	—	**400***-499	500-600
2027-2028	0-399	—	**400***-499	500-600
2028-2029	0-419	**420***-478	479-542	543-600
2029-2030	0-438	**439***-478	479-542	543-600
2030-2031	0-458	**459*-478**	479-542	543-600
2031-2032	0-478	—	**479***-542	543-600

Background Information

Raising Expectations in Virginia K-12 Education

Review the complete **VDOE Four-Year Phase-In Proficiency Implementation Plan for all grade-level SOLs in Reading and Math**

New Spring SOL Testing Window for 2026-2027

Grades 3–6

No change in length of spring testing window.

The window is four weeks long, as in prior years.

Grades 7–12

NEW

SOL testing is limited to the final two full instructional weeks of the semester or school year.

Spring 2027

May 27–June 10, 2027

Exceptions Grades 7–12

- Eligible Students with Disabilities (SWD) may test outside the two-week window.
- Term Graduates (grade 12 scheduled to graduate) who need a verified credit may test during the earlier term-graduate testing window.

2026-2027 APS Comprehensive Assessment Calendar

Impact to Expedited Retakes

- For the new math and reading cut scores, students may qualify for an expedited retake if they score **within 25 points** of the new **Pass/Approaching** cut score.
- For high school, students remain tied to the **math or reading cut score** in effect when they first took the SOL.
- **Grades 7–12:** Remediation and retakes must occur within the two-week testing window.

Expedited Retake (ER) for Grade 3 Reading	
2025–2026	**2026–2027**
Pass/Proficient: **400** ER Range: 375–399	Pass/Approaching: **418** ER Range: 393–417

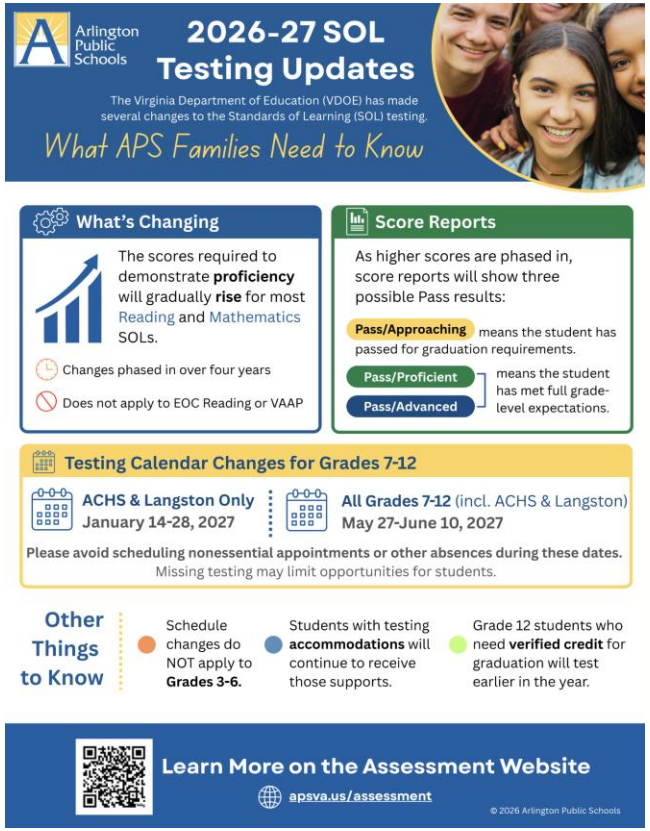
2026–2027 Reading and Mathematics SOL Cut Scores

Change for 2026–2027: Expedited retakes based solely on **extenuating circumstances** or **significant achievement discrepancy** are no longer available.

Family Communication Plan for SOL Changes

The Office of Assessment collaborated with the Office of School and Community Relations to develop a communication timeline to convey the SOL changes.

Date	Communication Plan
September 24, 2026	Information about SOL changes were shared in an Office of Academics monitoring report.
October 19, 2026	Division-wide message disseminated via Parent Square.
November 16, 2026	Principals will re-send the division-wide message accompanied with an Infographic in multiple languages.
March 1, 2027	Principals will re-share the division-wide message and Infographic in multiple languages.



Virginia Growth Assessment Discontinued

- The **Virginia Growth Assessment (VGA)** was a Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) through-growth assessment for students in **grades 3–8** in reading and math, administered in the fall and winter.
- It is **no longer required or available beginning in 2026–2027**.
- APS has administered the VDOE-approved **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth Reading and Math** assessments for grades 3–8 in place of the VGA over the past two years.
- **MAP Growth** continues to be a local assessment to measure student achievement and growth in **grades 3–8** and serves as a universal screener.

SAT School Day

Effective in 2026-2027, Virginia school divisions must offer students one opportunity to take the SAT during the school day in Grade 11 or Grade 12.

- Participation is *optional* for students.
- **Fall 2026:** APS offered SAT School Day to Grade 12 students.
- **Spring 2028:** APS plans to extend the opportunity to Grade 11 students.
- HB 410 requires divisions to offer the opportunity but does not require divisions to cover testing fees.
- Additional registration, payment, accommodation, and scheduling guidance has been shared with high schools.

For more information: SAT School Day (HB 410) One-Pager with Frequently Asked Questions

WIDA Alternate ACCESS Exit Criteria

WIDA Alternate ACCESS is the English language proficiency assessment for English Learner (EL) students identified with significant cognitive disabilities.

Why This Change Matters

This change establishes an equitable pathway for students taking WIDA Alternate ACCESS to exit EL status when they demonstrate English language proficiency. Previously, no exit criterion existed for these students.

New Exit Criterion*

Students scoring 4.0 or higher on WIDA Alternate ACCESS may exit EL services.

*Exiting EL status does not affect eligibility for special education services or IEP-required supports and accommodations.

Grades	ELP Assessment	Exit Criterion
Grades K-12	WIDA ACCESS	4.4 or higher
Grades K-12	**WIDA Alternate ACCESS**	**4.0 or higher**
Grades K-12	Virginia ELP Checklist *Students with significant hearing and/or visual impairment*	Assessed with Level 5 Checklist

This change is retroactive to the 2025–2026 school year.

WIDA Alternate ACCESS Participants 2025–2026

For the first time, students taking **WIDA Alternate ACCESS** have an established criterion for recognizing demonstrated English language proficiency.

136
Total Participants

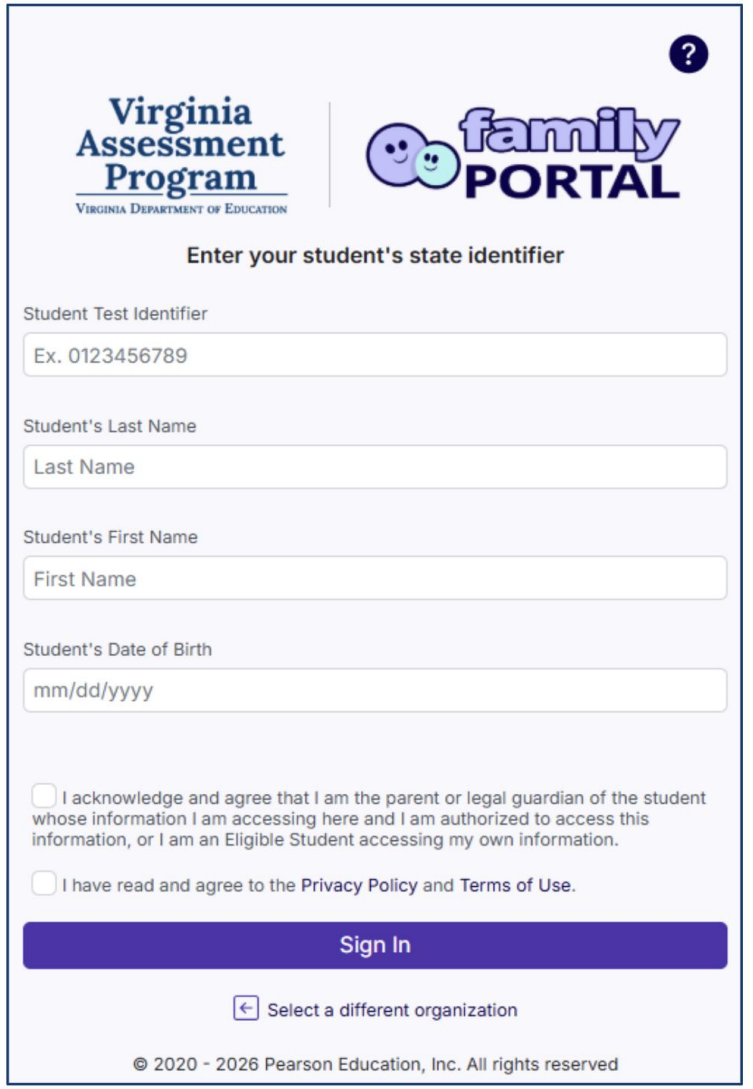
13
Met the New Proficiency Criterion

By School Level	
Elementary:	1
Middle:	2
High:	10

Result: Ten percent (10%) of participants met the new proficiency criterion and transitioned to EL monitoring status, a **milestone** not previously possible.

New VDOE Family Portal for SOL Results

- The **VDOE** is offering a new **Family Portal**.
- Parents will be able to:
  - Access student **SOL Student Detail by Question (SDBQ) Reports**
  - Download reports
  - View Spotlight videos
  - View reports for multiple years
  - Access resources
- Scores are expected to be available **approximately two weeks** after testing.
- The Office of Assessment will provide APS families with instructions and screenshots for accessing the new **VDOE Family Portal** in late winter, before spring SOL testing.
- APS will continue to share SOL reports in **ParentVUE**.



Looking Ahead: New Science Local Alternative Assessments

- The Science Office is developing new local alternative assessments (LAAs) for **Chemistry and Earth Science** for implementation in the **2027–2028 SY.**
- **Beginning in the 2027–2028 SY**, all students enrolled in Chemistry or Earth Science will complete the applicable alternative assessment.
- These LAAs will allow students enrolled in these courses to demonstrate **proficiency** in the standards as well as earn **verified credit** in Science without taking the corresponding SOL test.
- The Science Office is assembling development teams to complete this work during the **2026–2027 SY**.

Looking Ahead: SOL Results as Course Grades

VDOE Guidance Pending: More information is still forthcoming from VDOE on implementation timing and requirements. APS will review the state guidance once it is released and develop a plan accordingly.

For the 2028–2029 school year (projected), schools must include SOL test results and permissive local alternative assessment results as at least 10% of students' final course grades in grades 7–12, based on the grading scale currently used by the school division.

- The 2028–2029 timeline is projected.
- Additional guidance from VDOE is still needed on how this requirement will be implemented.
- School divisions will need to develop guidelines on implementing these calculations in their respective grading systems.

Next Steps

- Family communication developed in collaboration with School and Community Relations (SCR), with distribution on **November 16, 2026**, and a follow-up scheduled for **March 1, 2027**.

- Schools will publish their spring SOL testing calendars and communicate testing dates to families.

- The Office of Assessment will provide **Preparing for Spring SOL Testing** training to School Test Coordinators (STCs) in December, with additional training sessions planned for spring 2027.

Appendix

Appendix

SOL Proficiency and Cut Scores

- Raising Expectations in Virginia K–12 Education
- 2026–2027 Reading and Mathematics SOL Cut Scores
- VDOE Four-Year Phase-In Proficiency Implementation Plan for Reading and Math SOL

SOL Administration and Legislative Requirements

- Code of Virginia § 22.1-253.13:3
- HB299: SOL assessments and related assessment methods; development, administration, scoring, and release

SAT School Day

- SAT School Day (HB 410)

WIDA Alternate ACCESS

- VDOE Exit Criteria for WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS

Local Alternative Assessments

- VDOE Performance Tasks and Local Alternative Assessments

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