VASCD
P.O. Box 541
Crozet, VA 22932
(540) 466-0347



Policy Team
Advocacy Subcommittee
vascd.org
@vascd

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 30, 2023

VASCD's Position on Virginia's Accountability System to Modernize the Through-Year Growth Assessment

Virginia ASCD is a non-profit and non-partisan membership organization dedicated to advancing excellence in Virginia's schools to ensure a world-class education for every Virginia student. VASCD is an organization that is highly engaged in matters of teaching, learning, and leading in Virginia schools, and our commitment to a high-quality education and life-ready experiences for the students throughout the Commonwealth led us to begin monitoring the work to modernize assessment underway in Montana.

In a recent article from K-12 Dive, we learned that Montana received a waiver from the United States Department of Education with approval to implement a through-year growth assessment model. This was of interest to VASCD because our focus on modernizing assessment and including a growth model as part of Virginia's accountability system is one we believe will provide students, families, schools, and the Commonwealth with improved information about student learning. Our recommendations in this position statement are a culmination of review from several sources.

- Assessment Design and Implementation Considerations for the Montana Alternate Student Testing (MAST) Pilot Program
- HB 197
- HB 585
- MAP Growth Validation Study
- The Future of Assessment Practices: Comprehensive and Balanced Assessment Systems
- VASCD's Assessment Summit Executive Summary
- VASCD's Considerations for Accountability in Virginia
- VASCD's Policy Priorities for 2023-2024

Recommendation 1. Establish the purpose of through-year growth assessments and their place in the accountability system, along with goals to be achieved with implementation. Once agreed upon, communicate the purpose and goals to all stakeholders to ensure clarity in the vision, direction, and strategies.

Recommendation 2. Incorporate a single-source provider to develop through-year growth assessments that incorporate the end-of-year proficiency test as its final measure of the year. An aligned through-year growth model will (a) provide actionable data along with predictive

achievement score data, (b) eliminate the need for additional division-level benchmark testing, (c) minimize the impact of testing on instructional time as well as the length of each individual test, and (d) measure each student's growth over the course of the academic year.

Recommendation 3. Develop two separate indicators in the accountability system that report both proficiency and growth for all students. It is important that the through-year growth assessment model provides both pieces of information for which schools and divisions will be held accountable and provides relevant feedback for VDOE and VBOE to guide provision of support and resources.

Recommendation 4. Develop clear lines of communication, including actionable reporting data from the assessments, to articulate students' progress and specific feedback on strengths, challenges, and information to develop action plans for each student. In addition to communication of results, there is a need for clear documentation and explanation of the limits of proficiency and growth assessments in terms of curricular scope (i.e., breadth and depth). Because of the limitations of both achievement tests and through-year growth assessments on the scope of the curriculum, we recommend that sensible guidance about the important responsibility of school divisions is provided to ensure that the full breadth and depth of the curriculum are taught to all students.

We will continue to monitor Montana's progress and stand both eager and ready to collaborate with VBOE, VDOE, and other stakeholders to assist in the work required to modernize Virginia's assessment system.

Respectfully,



Christopher M. Jones, Executive Director
On behalf of the VASCD Policy Team

About VASCD
Virginia ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), an affiliate of ASCD, is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to advancing excellence in Virginia's schools. We have 1,800 members in Virginia who are teachers, superintendents, teacher educators, school leaders, students, and central office administrators. We represent a variety of roles and share a single purpose - ensuring a world-class education for every Virginia student.