

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ I. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ June 28, 2006 \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic:** First Review of Recommended Cut Scores for the Literacy and Numeracy Assessments Required for the Modified Standard Diploma

**Presenter:** Mrs. Shelley Loving-Ryder, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Assessment and Reporting

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## Origin:

\_\_\_\_\_ Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by

\_\_\_\_\_ State or federal law or regulation

Board of Education regulation

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Action requested at this meeting \_\_\_\_\_ Action requested at future meeting: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

\_\_\_\_\_ Previous review/action

date \_\_\_\_\_

action \_\_\_\_\_

## Background Information

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools (SOA)* adopted by the Board of Education on July 28, 2000, describe the Modified Standard Diploma as “intended for certain students at the secondary level who have a disability and are unlikely to meet the credit requirements for a Standard Diploma. Eligibility and participation in the Modified Standard Diploma shall be determined by the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and the student, where appropriate, at any point after the student’s eighth grade year.” The Standards of Accreditation also require that “beginning with the ninth grade class of 2000-01, students pursuing the Modified Standard Diploma shall pass literacy and numeracy competency assessments prescribed by the Board.”

In the *Guidelines for Implementing Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, adopted by the Board on November 30, 2000, the Board identified the grade 8 Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in reading and mathematics as the literacy and numeracy assessments for the Modified Standard Diploma. While the Board of Education adopted cut scores for the achievement levels of pass/proficient and pass/advanced on the grade 8 reading and mathematics tests in 1998, at that time, the use of these assessments as verification measures of numeracy and literacy for the Modified Standard Diploma had not been determined and this purpose was not considered by the standard setting committees.

In early March 2004 committees of educators were convened to recommend to the Board of Education cut scores on the grade 8 SOL tests in reading and mathematics that would represent the literacy and numeracy skills required by the Modified Standard Diploma. At its March 2004 meeting the Board of Education adopted scaled scores of 299 for the grade 8 reading test and 360 for the grade 8 mathematics tests as representing the literacy and numeracy requirements of the Modified Standard Diploma. These adjusted cut scores are used by school divisions solely to verify the literacy and numeracy skills of students for the purposes of the Modified Standard Diploma and have no impact on the scores required to pass the grade 8 reading and mathematics tests.

In spring 2006 new grade 8 reading and mathematics tests were administered. Previously the grade 8 tests covered content from the Standards of Learning for grades 6 through 8. With the addition of reading and mathematics tests for grades 6 and 7 to meet the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, the grade 8 reading and mathematics tests administered in spring 2006 covered grade 8 content only. In June 2006 committees of educators convened to recommend to the Board of Education cut scores on the new grade 8 reading and mathematics tests that would represent the literacy and numeracy skills required by the Modified Standard Diploma.

### **Summary of Major Elements**

Information about the range of cut scores recommended by the committees for the grade 8 Standards of Learning tests in reading and mathematics as measures of the literacy and numeracy requirements of the Modified Standard Diploma will be presented to the Board. The Board is asked to review this information and to adopt adjusted cut scores for the two tests for the purpose of verifying the literacy and numeracy skills required by the Modified Standard Diploma.

### **Superintendent's Recommendation**

The Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board waive first review and adopt adjusted cut scores for the grade 8 Standards of Learning tests in reading and mathematics when used as measures of the literacy and numeracy requirements of the Modified Standard Diploma.

### **Impact on Resources**

N/A

### **Timetable for Further Review/Action**

Department of Education staff will continue to review the use of the grade 8 reading and mathematics tests as the literacy and numeracy assessments for the Modified Standard Diploma as the annual tests required by the *No Child Left Behind* legislation are implemented.