

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Timothy M. Kaine
Governor

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**“LEXILE MEASURES” TO PROVIDE PARENTS AND
TEACHERS WITH NEW TOOL TO PROMOTE READING
& LITERACY**

~ Addition to SOL Reports Connects Students with Challenging Books ~

RICHMOND – Governor Timothy M. Kaine today announced a new initiative that will help parents select books that will strengthen their children’s reading skills. When elementary and middle school students receive their Standards of Learning (SOL) test reports next spring and summer, their reading scores will be accompanied by a corresponding “Lexile measure” parents can use to select books.

A Lexile measure ranks reading ability and text difficulty on a single scale, allowing parents — and teachers — to select books at or slightly above a student’s reading level. Currently, more than 115,000 books have been assigned a Lexile measure.

“Virginia must increase literacy levels if the Commonwealth is to compete in the global economy,” Governor Kaine said. “Adding this information to SOL reports is another way to help Virginia students develop the comprehension skills they’ll need to be successful.”

Governor Kaine and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) worked with MetaMetrics Inc. to include Lexile measures in the SOL testing program to provide parents and educators with a new tool for selecting reading materials that challenge students and increase comprehension.

Adding Lexile measures to SOL reports supports Governor Kaine’s goal of increasing early reading skills and the Board of Education’s focus on improving adolescent literacy.

“This is a practical step that connects teachers and parents in a partnership to promote reading and literacy,” said Board of Education President Mark E. Emblidge.

“Teachers can use Lexile measures to assign and recommend books that will help students develop stronger reading skills,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright. “Parents can use Lexile measures to select texts that reinforce what teachers are trying to accomplish in the classroom.”

Lexile measures will be reported with the scores of students taking SOL reading tests in grades 3-8 next spring. In the meantime, students, parents and teachers can match scores from the 2008 SOL reading tests with corresponding Lexile measures by using a conversion table available on the VDOE Web site.

“Lexiles enhance state assessment programs by converting scale scores into useful information,” said MetaMetrics President Malbert Smith III. “MetaMetrics is proud to collaborate with Governor Kaine, the Board of Education and VDOE in providing this new tool for Virginia’s schools and families.”

MetaMetrics maintains an online database of books with Lexile measures that can be searched by title, author, topic and reading level.

To promote the use of Lexile measures, VDOE is providing elementary, middle and high schools Lexile charts with sample book titles grouped by Lexile range and difficulty level. The charts will be distributed to parents of students in grades 3-9 and include information on how to select books using a Lexile measure.

Two Web-based training modules are available on the VDOE Web site for parents and educators to gain an understanding of Lexile measures and how they can be used to increase students’ reading comprehension skills.

VDOE is conducting four training sessions this fall for division-level instructional leaders, administrators, school librarians and reading specialists on how Lexile measures can be used to increase reading achievement.

VDOE also will work with public libraries to raise awareness about the addition of Lexile measures to SOL reports and how teachers and parents can find out if a title has a Lexile measure.

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