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Virginia Public Schools to Test Internet Connection Speeds ***All Schools Asked to Conduct 10 Tests in October***

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is asking the commonwealth's public schools to participate in an October statewide test of Internet connection speeds.

Each school division is requested to designate an individual — such as a division technology director — to coordinate the testing and ensure that the tests are conducted in every school in the division.

The goal is for each of the state's 1,867 public schools — and all buildings housing regional and specialty educational programs — to conduct 10 connection-speed tests during October.

“The information gathered through these tests will help school divisions and the department plan for increases in the use of wireless devices and in the popularity of online learning,” said VDOE Director of Digital Innovations and Outreach Tammy McGraw. “Maintaining reliable high-bandwidth access in all schools is also critical as the commonwealth's online assessment system focuses on problem solving and critical thinking, as well as content knowledge.”

Assigned testers in each school complete the tests by accessing the Virginia School Speed Test website and following the step-by-step instructions. Tests should be administered over several days and should be performed at different times of day.

The Virginia School Speed Test is an online application that measures bandwidth experienced by teachers and students. Each test takes about one minute and documents upload and download speeds, as well as the browser and operating system of the device used to complete the test.

Virginia is a national leader in providing Internet access to students for instruction and assessment. Since 2001, the commonwealth has invested approximately \$760 million dollars in infrastructure and hardware to create and maintain high-speed Internet connectivity in all schools and improve online instruction and testing capabilities.

VDOE will use data from the October connection speed tests to inform efforts to further improve Internet access for students. In addition, data will be shared with state technology agencies responsible for updating Virginia's Interactive Broadband Availability Map.

The Virginia School Speed Test is part of the National School Broadband Test organized by EducationSuperHighway, a non-profit dedicated to improving Internet access in schools nationwide.

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