

VIRGINIA ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS

1. What is the difference between the old VAAP and the new VAAP?

The old VAAP was a portfolio design where students submitted Collections of Evidence consisting of work samples in the assessed content areas. The new VAAP is composed of test questions with 3 answer choices and is delivered in an online and a paper format.

It is expected that most students regardless of the format used will be tested individually using multiple and flexible ways to demonstrate their knowledge. The support of assistive technology and alternative communications modes such as verbal responses, pointing, head movement, or eye gaze are allowable.

2. What content areas are included in the new VAAP?

The content areas assessed by the new VAAP are reading and mathematics in Grades 3 through 8 and high school and science in Grades 5, 8, and high school. Each content area has academic standards based on the Standards of Learning that have been reduced in depth, breadth, and complexity. These academic standards are called the [Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning \(VESOL\)](#).

3. Who is eligible to take the VAAP?

The VAAP is the statewide alternate assessment that is specifically designed to evaluate the achievement of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in Grades 3-8 and high school. Only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and who meet the criteria using the [VAAP Participation Decision-Making Tool](#) may be assessed through the VAAP. Eligibility decisions can only be made by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. Students with disabilities served by 504 Plans are not eligible for participation in VAAP.

4. Can we choose for our child to participate in the old VAAP?

No, the old VAAP has gone away. The last administration of the old VAAP was in the 2020-2021 school year.

5. When did the new VAAP go into effect?

The implementation of the new VAAP began in the 2021-2022 school year. Eligible students began to take the test in the spring of 2022, and score reports became available from your student's school division in late summer or early fall of 2022. Please keep in mind that students' scores on the new VAAP will not impact their promotion to the next grade or graduation from high school with an Applied Studies Diploma.

6. Where can I find additional information about the new VAAP?

Additional information about the new VAAP is available on the Virginia Department of Education website on the [Virginia Alternate Assessment Program](#) web page. This page provides access to training modules, participation criteria and guidelines, reading, mathematics and science VESOL, as well as VAAP sample and practice items.