

# VIRGINIA EDUCATION COALITION

Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals (VAESP)  
Virginia Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (VACTE)  
Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS)  
Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals (VASSP)  
Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (VASCD)  
Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers (VAPTA)

Virginia Counselors Association (VCA)  
Virginia Education Association (VEA)  
Virginia Professors of Educational Leadership (VPEL)  
Virginia School Counselors Association (VSCA)  
Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA)  
Virginia Middle School Association (VMSA)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### TWELVE STATE ORGANIZATIONS ADOPT RESOLUTION TO CHANGE TESTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN VIRGINIA

*Richmond, Virginia* (November 19, 2013) – The representatives of twelve major education associations in Virginia recently adopted a resolution calling for state policymakers to change Virginia’s system of testing and accountability so that it is more effective in preparing students for college and careers and more valid in holding educators accountable for student achievement. The resolution, which has also been adopted by one third of the local school boards in the state, urges members of the General Assembly and other state policymakers to:

- eliminate the current pattern of over-testing by reducing the 34 Standards of Learning (SOL) tests taken by students in grades 3-11;
- include assessments in lieu of the SOL tests, which can more accurately determine growth in student achievement;
- use more reliable and valid measures of students’ attainment of knowledge and their application of analytical and problem-solving skills necessary for their futures;
- improve the preparation of students for college and careers;
- allow for failing students to retake tests when they are ready rather than wait months; and
- take into consideration a number of important factors when evaluating teachers, administrators and schools rather than over-emphasizing SOL test results.

“The members of all twelve education organizations, which adopted the resolution, believe that holding educators accountable for student achievement is important, but not the way that it’s currently done by the state by testing students 34 times in grades three through eleven and by using invalid methods of measuring and comparing student progress for the purpose of evaluating educators,” according to Steven R. Staples, Executive Director of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents and Chairman of the Virginia Education Coalition. He continued, “Educators welcome evaluation in order to receive constructive feedback, however, the state’s method of evaluating their performance based on improvement in test scores by comparing entirely different groups of students, is statistically invalid.”

The Virginia Education Coalition is comprised of twelve major education associations including: the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals; the Virginia Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; the Virginia Association of School Superintendents; the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals; the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; the Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers; the Virginia Counselors Association; the Virginia Education Association; the Virginia Professors of Educational Leadership; the Virginia School Counselors Association; the Virginia School Boards Association; and the Virginia Middle School Association.

To see the forty Virginia school boards that have adopted the resolution as of Nov. 19 go to the Virginia Association of School Superintendents website: <http://www.vassonline.org/>; click on *School Division Testing Resolution* in left-hand vertical column and then *School Divisions Adopted Testing Resolution*.