Testing accommodations in Virginia for Students with Disabilities and English Learners

***Students with disabilities*** may be excused from SOLs if they are assessed by the school IEP team to have disabilities that make participation too challenging. The state provides Virginia Alternative Assessment Program (VAAP) participation criteria to guide IEP Teams in identifying the population of students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to be assessed using the SOL tests even with accommodations. Some may be allowed math aids as defined in VDOE’s Explanation of Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, Math Aids – Accommodation Code 19. There are other accommodations as necessary to give children with disabilities a fair chance to participate.

**English Learners.**  Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) requires that ***English Learners (Els)*** participate in state content assessments*.* ELs who have attended school in the United States for less than 12 cumulative months may receive a one-time exemption for the SOL Reading test in grades 3 through 8. This guideline also applies to students arriving from Puerto Rico. No exemption is available for the End-of-Course SOL Reading test.

English Learners are evaluated by each school’s El Committee with the following options:

* SOL test without testing accommodations;
* SOL test with testing accommodations (listing specific testing accommodations). The read-aloud accommodation for Mathematics, Science, History/Social Science, and Writing assessments is allowed for students with disabilities and EL students as specified in the student’s IEP, 504 Plan, or EL Student Assessment Participation Plan.; or
* Exemption from testing where permitted with an explanation for the exemption.