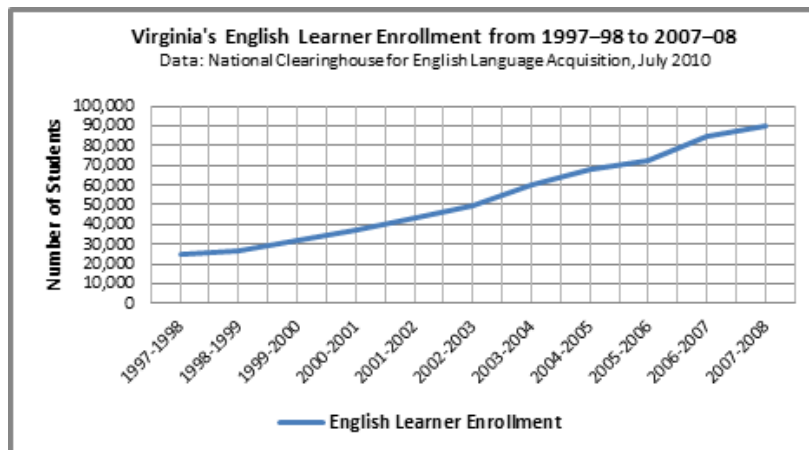# STATE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

VIRGINIA

Virginia uses the state's Standards of Learning (SOL) for its academic curricula; it has not adopted the Common Core State Standards, but the Virginia Department of Education say the SOLs align with or exceed the Common Core and other college- and career-readiness standards. More rigorous content standards for mathematics, English and science were implemented in the 2012-13 school year. The majority of SOL assessment exams are administered online.[1]

ENGLISH LEARNER POPULATION

Between 1997–98 and 2009–10, Virginia's reported student enrollment of English learner students increased by **over 261 percent**, according to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA).[2] National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports show that from 2005–06 to 2010–11, **Virginia's English learner enrollment continued to increase but at a more gradual pace**, to about 86,000 students.[3]

Virginia's English Learner Enrollment from 1997–98 to 2007–08
Data: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, July 2010

In 2010–11, English learners accounted for **7.1 percent** of a total K-12 public school student population of about 1.25 million.[4] For 2009–10, Virginia state assessments reported 97,763 English learners students, **61 percent of whom spoke Spanish as their primary language**. Less than 5 percent each of English learners spoke Arabic, Korean, Vietnamese and Urdu.[5]

ENGLISH LEARNER PROGRAMS

NVirginia school districts provide several **language instruction educational programs (LIEPs)** that are English-only or that use both English and another language. English-only LIEPS include structured English immersion, sheltered English instruction, specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE), content-based English as a second language (ESL), and pull-out ESL programs. Other LIEPs consist of two-way immersion, transitional bilingual, dual language, developmental bilingual and heritage language programs.[6] Virginia uses the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Proficiency Standards.[7]

ASSESSMENTS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Virginia State Assessments for 2011–12 [16]:
- The percentage of fourth-grade English learners that met standards in reading was 72%.
- The percentage of eighth-grade English learners that met standards in math was 42%.

2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)[17][18]:
- In Virginia, 7% of fourth-grade English learners performed at or above proficient in reading. That number was 7% nationally.
- In Virginia, 41% of fourth-grade non-English learners performed at or above proficient in reading. That number was 35% nationally.
- In Virginia, 5% of eighth-grade English learners performed at or above proficient in math. That number was 5% nationally.
- In Virginia, 42% of eighth-grade non-English learners performed at or above proficient in math. That number was 35% nationally.

Virginia-reported adjusted cohort on-time graduation rates were[19]:
- In 2010–11, 55% for English learners and 82% for all students.
- In 2011–12, 55% for English learners and 83% for all students.

HIGHLIGHTS OF STATE POLICY

- Virginia state laws authorize special programs for students ages 2 to 21 who are English learners, including those who may have disabilities.[8]

- The Virginia education department provides resources and guidelines for teachers to teach English and math to English learners.[9]
    - Guidelines consider English learner students' emotional and mental states.
    - Training includes providing cultural sensitivity learning materials.
    - Advice includes recommendations on speech patterns teachers may adopt.

HIGHLIGHTS OF FEDERAL LAW AND PROGRAMS

- Virginia was approved in 2012 for an **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) flexibility waiver**.[10] Under its wavier plan, Virginia indicated that the Virginia Board of Education had adopted the ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) as the statewide English language proficiency (ELP) assessment for Virginia.[11]
    - Virginia provides a "number of resources and services are also available to schools to assist teachers in helping LEP students demonstrate their ability to understand, read, and write English in order to function and be successful in school and in American society" via its ESL Instructional Web page (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/esl/).[12]
    - Virginia lowered the minimum subgroup size for inclusion of a subgroup in the state's accountability system (the "N size") to 30.[13]
    - Virginia has established three "super subgroups" in its accountability system:[14]
        - Gap Group 1: Students with disabilities, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students (unduplicated).
        - Gap Group 2: Black students (not of Hispanic origin), including students with disabilities, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students.
        - Gap Group 3: Hispanic students, of one or more races, including students with disabilities, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students.

- Virginia placed 31st in Round 1 of the **Race to the Top (RTT) competition** and did not submit an application for Round 2 or the Early Learning Challenge.[15]

1 Virginia Department of Education (accessed March 2014) http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/

2 National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (accessed Mar. 2014) http://www.ncela.us/files/uploads/20/Virginia_G_0708.pdf

3 National Center for Education Statistics (accessed March 2014) http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12_047.asp

4 NCES (accessed March 2014) http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12_047.asp

5 U.S. Department of Education, "Consolidated State Performance Report: School Year 2009-10 - Virginia," Feb. 2011, page 48

6 National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (accessed March 2014) http://www.ncela.us/files/uploads/3/Biennial_Report_0810.pdf

7 WIDA (accessed Mar. 2014) http://www.wida.us/membership/states/Virginia.aspx

8 Virginia Dept. of ED (accessed March 2014) http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/iep_instruct_svcs/english_lang_learners/

9 Ibid.

10 U.S. Department of Education (accessed March 2014) http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/map/va.html

11 U.S. Department of Education Virginia ESEA Flexibility Request Revisions Submitted January 11, 2013 (accessed March 2014) http://www2.ed.gov/policy/eseaflex/approved-requests/vaamend31513.pdf page 23

12 Ibid. page 30

13 Ibid. page 50

14 Ibid. page 54

15 U.S. Department of Education (accessed March 2014) http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/index.html

16 K-12 Public Schools Report Card - Virginia Tests (accessed March 2014) http://www.pen.k12.va.us/statistics_reports/school_report_card/index.shtml

17 The Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2011 (accessed March 2014) http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2011/2012458.pdf *As of March 2014, 2013 NAEP data for English learners was not available.*

18 The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2011 (accessed March 2014) http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2011/2012457.pdf *As of March 2014, 2013 NAEP data for English learners was not available.*

19 Ed Data Express: Virginia (accessed March 2014) http://eddataexpress.ed.gov/state-report.cfm?state=VA