The New Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP)

LCPS SEAC Meeting
April 6, 2022
The original 2000-2001 VAAP was designed as a portfolio-based state assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

On February 5, 2019, USDOE notified Virginia that the portfolio design of the VAAP did not meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

2020-21 was the last year for reading, mathematics, and science ASOLs and portfolio design.

2021-22 is the first year for Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOL) and new VAAP assessment.
The New VAAP

• The new VAAP test replaces the portfolio design and is available to eligible students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3 through 8 and high school in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science.

• VAAP assessments are multiple choice test items based on the VESOL and include three answer options.

• Most test items are read to the student through the online text-to-speech option or may be read by the Examiner.
Who Takes the VAAP Assessment?

- Not every individual with a developmental or cognitive disability fits within the criteria of the VAAP participation.
- Decisions about participation in the VAAP are always made by the student’s IEP team.
- More information about VAAP eligibility is available on the VAAP Participation Criteria and the Determination of Significant Cognitive Disabilities (guidance document).
New VAAP Test Design

• Items are designed to permit maximum flexibility for students to independently show what they have learned while maintaining test security.

• Students may view the test items online on a computer and/or in a paper version.

• Students may enter their responses to items online or indicate their response to the Examiner with their typically used communication modality.
Example from Grade 3 - Math

**SOL**

3.3a The student will estimate and determine the sum or difference of two whole numbers.

**VESOL**

Add and subtract whole numbers up to 20.
Sample Grade 3 VAAP Math Item

6 + 8 = ___?

8  10  14
Example from Grade 5 - Reading

**SOL**
5.5A Summarize plot events using details from text.
5.5B Discuss the impact of setting on plot development.
5.5C Describe character development.
5.5E Explain the resolution of conflict(s).

**VESOL**
Identify a character, setting, or event in a story read to student.

Scan to ask a question or go to http://bit.ly/seacquestions
Sample Grade 5 VAAP Reading Item

Ben likes to bake bread.

What does Ben bake?

apple  oven  bread
SOL
BIO.2 The student will investigate and understand that chemical and biochemical processes are essential for life. Key ideas include a) water chemistry has an influence on life processes; b) macromolecules have roles in maintaining life processes; c) enzymes have a role in biochemical processes; d) protein synthesis is the process of forming proteins which influences inheritance and evolution; and e) the processes of photosynthesis and respiration include the capture, storage, transformation, and flow of energy.

VESOL
Sci.4.2.a-c.1: Recognize that plants need light, air, and water to grow and create energy through photosynthesis.
Sample Grade 11 VAAP Science Item

Which plant will likely grow better?

A

B

C

Scan to ask a question or go to http://bit.ly/seacquestions
New VAAP Structure

• 35 test items on each test
• Administered individually to most students.
• Easier items are presented first, followed by more challenging items, to maximize access for students.
• Tests can be administered in multiple sessions/days with the number of items administered in each sitting determined by the student’s needs.
• Most items are read to students
• Online supports such as color contrast, magnification are available within the test
VAAP Testing Conditions for **ALL** Participants

**Timing/Scheduling Conditions:**
- Multiple test sessions; may occur over multiple days
- Time of day
- Order of tests
- Planned breaks during test

**Setting Conditions:**
- Test location
- Adaptive or special furniture
- Special lighting
- Individual testing
VAAP Presentation Conditions

Presentation Conditions

• Manipulatives*
• Calculator*
• Verbal/Visual prompts8
• Visual Aids: (Highlighter, Masking devices, Color overlays)
• Magnification
• Auditory amplification/buffers
• Visual point-to support of directions/question/answer options
• Student read-aloud and sub-vocalization
VAAP Response Conditions

• **Response Conditions**
  - Attentional/Self-Regulation Sensory Supports
  - Physical Position Supports
  - Examiner Records Responses
  - Assistive Technology*
  - Alternate Response Modes (eye gaze, pointing, head wand)
  - Response Aids for Paper Version (adaptive pencils, key guard)
Individual Test Accommodations

Individual test accommodations provide eligible VAAP participants access to the new VAAP test as a means to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

• Individual test accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment which result in an adjustment to how the test is presented or how the student responds to test items.

• When selected and used appropriately, individual test accommodations reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student’s disability without impacting learning expectations or providing an unfair advantage.

• Individual test accommodations **must** be documented in the student’s IEP.
Individual Test Accommodations Must:

• Maintain the integrity of the assessment;
• Avoid leading to or providing the student a direct answer;
• Be used routinely in instruction;
• Reflect the student’s learning styles; and
• Allow a student to respond using a mode that is appropriate for the student.
Individual Test Accommodations

Accommodations

• Braille
• Interpreting/transliteration
• Read Aloud*
• Alternate Representation of Response Options*
Old and New VAAP Summary Comparison

Old VAAP
• The old VAAP used a portfolio design in which students submitted Collections of Evidence consisting of work samples in the assessed content areas.
• The old VAAP was administered throughout the school year.

New VAAP
• The new VAAP in reading, mathematics, and science is composed of test questions with 3 answer choices. Test questions are based on the VESOL with varying levels of complexity.
• The new VAAP is administered in the spring and most likely individually to students using a variety of testing conditions, accommodations, and other supports.
2022 VAAP Testing Dates

• The Test Administration window for VAAP opened on February 28, 2022, and closes on June 24, 2022.

• Students may be administered the VAAP test during this window according to their school division’s testing schedule.
New VAAP Score Reports

• Score reports on your student’s performance will be available during the late summer or early fall of 2022.
• Student scores on the new VAAP do not impact their promotion to the grade or graduation from high school with an Applied Studies Diploma.
New VAAP Practice Resources

- [https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/alternative_assessments/vaap_va_alt_assessment_prog/index.shtml](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/alternative_assessments/vaap_va_alt_assessment_prog/index.shtml)

- Sample items provide families a quick snapshot of items across various content and grade levels.

- Practice Items are available in each of the grade levels and content areas tested for students to become familiar with the format and supports in TestNav.
New VAAP Family Resources

• New VAAP Parent FAQ:  

• VDOE VAAP Parent Webinar:  
  https://youtu.be/hS0q_2ira18

• TTAC Online VESOL Instruction Resources:  
  https://ttaconline.org/vesol
Thank You!

Please visit: TTAC Online and Virginia Family Special Education Connection for more excellent resources!

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