



## **A Guide to Assessment**

### **K-8**

Lexington City Schools (LCS) uses a wide variety of assessments to measure student mastery of content area knowledge and demonstration of skills. Assessments include, but are not limited to, performance tasks, written responses, multiple-choice tests, and other measures of student competencies. Many of the assessments students take are required by the state and federal departments of education to measure student progress toward performance benchmarks. Other local assessments are used to monitor student progress, differentiate instruction, identify students' individual learning support needs, and to measure the skills students require in order to learn new content.

Additional information related to testing and test data can be found at [www.lexedu.org](http://www.lexedu.org).

NAME OF ASSESSMENT	REQUIRED, MANDATED, OR OPTIONAL	WHO TAKES IT?	WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?	HOW ARE RESULTS USED?	
<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS</b>	LCS Quarterly Benchmarks	Required by the Division	Students in grades 3-5	Quarterly benchmarks are administered to measure students' mastery of learning objectives.	Results inform group and individual instruction.
	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	State mandated	Students in grades K-3	The PALS is used to determine individualized instructional needs in the area of literacy. The PALS is also used to determine if additional reading assistance is needed through the Title I Reading program.	Results are used to provide daily individualized or small-group literacy instruction for all students who qualify, utilizing PALS benchmarks. The results are also available for classroom teachers to utilize for small group instruction in areas of need for all students.
	Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP)	State mandated	All Kindergarten students	VKRP's mission is to measure kindergarten readiness across literacy, math, self-regulation, and social skills. Teachers receive classroom and student-level reports, which link directly to recommended resources based on assessment data, helping teachers individualize and focus classroom instruction.	Results are used to inform whole group and small group instruction.

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<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS</b>	Virginia Growth Assessments (VGAs)	State mandated	Students in grades 3-5	VGAs are mandated state assessments administered for Reading and Math in the Fall and Winter of each school year. VGAs measure student grade level content knowledge of the Virginia SOL and provide each student with a scaled score.	The purpose is to measure student growth from fall to winter to Spring SOL assessments. Parents are provided access to the state parent portal.
	Standards of Learning tests (SOL)	State mandated	Students in grades 3-5	The SOL tests are the state mandated assessments that measure mastery of the state standards, the Virginia Standards of Learning.	The results of the SOL tests are used for state accreditation and compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act. Students in high school must pass a certain number of SOL tests in order to earn verified credits toward a standard or advanced diploma. Individual student results are used as one measure to make educational decisions. Summary results are used as one measure to guide school improvement actions.
	ACCESS testing for English Language Learners	Required by the State	Students receiving EL services or students who may qualify for EL programming in grades K-5	ACCESS testing is given annually to monitor students' progress in acquiring English language in academic contexts.	Meets U.S. federal requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for monitoring and reporting ELs' progress toward English language proficiency. Individual student results are used to make educational decisions.

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<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS</b>	Virginia Alternative Assessment Program (VAAP)	Required by the State	Students with significant cognitive abilities in grades 3-5	State-mandated assessments based on academic content standards derived from the Standards of Learning (SOL) in reading, mathematics, and science that have been reduced in depth, breadth, and complexity.	The results of the VAAP tests are used for state accreditation and compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act. Individual student results are used as one measure to make educational decisions.
	Alternative Assessments	Required by the State	Students in Grade 3 Science and History  Students in Grade 5 US History I and Writing	The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) requires that all students take alternative assessments to replace the eliminated SOL tests in grades 3 and 5. The alternative assessments engage students in skills-based performance tasks that promote critical and creative thinking.	Results are used by teachers to inform instruction and measure student mastery of content and skills. The school division must verify that alternative assessments were given to each student who would have taken the eliminated SOL test. Performance results are shared with parents by the teacher.
	Alternative Assessments	Required by the Division	Students in grades 2-5	The division requires that students engage in alternative assessments and performance tasks that promote critical and creative thinking.	Results are used by teachers to inform instruction and measure student mastery of content and skills.

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<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS</b>	Teacher Created Assessments Or Textbook Assessments	Optional	Students in grade K-8	Teacher created assessments and/or textbook assessments are used to measure student progress and mastery of core content and skills.	Results are used to inform instruction and the need for re-teaching. Results indicate student mastery of grade level content and skills.
	Guided Reading Assessments	Required by the school	Students in grades 3-5	The Guided Reading Assessment helps teacher determine students' reading level and target instructional next steps measuring word knowledge, phonics skills, fluency, and comprehension skills. Guided Reading Assessments are administered in the fall to all 3rd-5th students; Administered to below level readers mid-year; Administered to Title I readers at the end of the year.	Results are used to inform instruction and differentiation strategies. Results help teachers provide individualized or small-group literacy instruction.

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<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS</b>	LCS Quarterly Benchmarks	Required by the Division	Students in grades 6-8	Quarterly benchmarks are administered to measure students' mastery of learning objectives.	Results inform group and individual instruction
	Alternative Assessments	Required by the State	Students in Grade 6 US History II	The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) requires that all students take alternative assessments to replace the eliminated SOL test in US History II. The alternative assessment engages students in skills-based performance tasks that promote critical and creative thinking.	Results are used by teachers to inform instruction and measure student master of content and skills. The school division must verify that alternative assessments were given to each student who would have taken the eliminated SOL test. Performance results are shared with parents by the teacher.
	Alternative Assessments	Required by the Division	Students in grades 6-8	The division requires that students engage in alternative assessments and performance tasks that promote critical and creative thinking.	Results are used by teachers to inform instruction and measure student mastery of content and skills.
	Teacher Created Assessments Or Textbook Assessments	Optional	Students in grades 6-8	Teacher created assessments and/or textbook assessments are used to measure student progress and mastery of core content and skills.	Results are used to inform instruction and the need for re-teaching. Results indicate student mastery of grade level content and skills.

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