



## FY 2021 Recommended Budget Budget Question

Board Question #: 10

**BUDGET QUESTION:** Where does Spotsylvania rank on testing scores compared to other jurisdictions?

**RESPONDING DEPARTMENT/OFFICE:** Schools

**RESPONSE:** In 2017 during the budget process, a similar question was asked, along with several other questions from BOS, CBRC and citizens. At that time, we provided a document that we developed in response.

- Standards of Learning Tests (SOLs) are administered annually for certain grades, content and/or courses. The most recent era of SOL testing could be fairly described as moving from minimum proficiency assessments to more rigorous assessments that require higher levels of critical thinking, knowledge retention and content skill acquisition.
- Every year, publicly, we have shared before the school board and referenced in presentations/discussions with the board of supervisors our school and division accreditation results to include overall scores and by student reporting categories.
- It is also important to note that the most rigorous, challenging assessment, accountability, and accreditation requirements have been implemented during a time when state and local funding levels have been there lowest.
- These new, more rigorous assessments, particularly in literacy and math, began to impact school divisions in terms of scores in 2013-14. At that end of that school year, 2014, our school division went from having all or almost all schools “fully accredited” based on SOL score performance, to 66%. 10 of our schools did not meet at least one of the required testing benchmarks in either English or Math. The next year, 2015, SCPS achieved significant improvement and had all but 2 schools designated as fully accredited. As an example of the improvement achieved during that year, our school division improved Math performance overall by 7%, going from scoring slightly below state averages to slightly above the state average.
- Following the 2017 budget deliberations and adoption (and after we first responded to this question), our schools and school division sustained and, in many instances, improved grade level, course, student reporting categories, school and division SOL performance. Again, the majority of our schools showed growth or improvement.
- Over the past few years, No Child Left Behind was reauthorized and is now the Federal Education Law...Every Student Succeeds Act. At the same time, our state was engaged in the development of a Profile of a Virginia Graduate and SOL reform. This process has yielded in our state, in alignment with ESSA, yet another accountability and accreditation model that is intended to place less emphasis on standardized testing,

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particularly at the high school level. While this new accountability/accreditation system does reduce the number of some previously required SOL tests, many other measures are now included/required, along with performance benchmarks, to promote and ensure improvement.

- This past year (2019), again, 100% of our schools (29/29) designated as fully accredited. This means that all of our schools met the required SOL benchmarks for accountability based on this year or last year rules.
- SOL scores have historically been calculated and reported in two different ways, using separate statistical formulas. Federal pass rates are reported strictly pass/fail (% of students who pass) while the State pass rates include not only current pass rates but factor in growth as well as other adjustments. Prior to 2018, Federal pass rates were calculated only one way. Currently, they are calculated three different ways. Our school division results were presented to the school board in the Fall. We exceeded all federal benchmarks for performance. The state SOL pass rates are now only compiled and reported including a growth methodology. All of our schools met or exceeded the state benchmarks for performance. The state no longer provides a division average or division accreditation, only school by school.
- Though we attempted to provide “rankings” in 2017, the state does not currently have a “ranking” system for SOL performance/scores.
- In 2019, most school divisions and the state SOL score averages using the Federal pass rates, declined or maintained in the area of Reading. SCPS also saw declines, yet the state growth model SOL results demonstrated, in another way, that our school division continues to increase student learning even as our student learning needs have become more challenging and diverse.
- SOL data is disaggregated and used by our school division for the purpose of determining strategies and resources to address learning and achievement. Any comparisons with other schools and school divisions is to promote and support continuous improvement. In many cases, “comparing” SOL performance, not only from year to year, but school to school and division to division, can yield false or inaccurate conclusions since we have different students, different needs, different levels, different years and different assessments to consider in those comparisons.
- Virginia Profile of a Graduate, ESSA, and State accountability requires numerous assessments such as:
  - Chronic Absenteeism
  - Federal Graduation Index
  - Graduation Completion Index
  - On Time Graduation
  - College and Career Readiness
  - Career and Technical Credentialing Exam
  - SOL Replacement test such as

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- AP tests
- IB tests
- Work keys
- Literacy screenings such as
- Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)
- Benchmark Assessment System (BAS)
- Renaissance Learning – Star Reading Inventory
- Lexia Learning
- Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI)

Spotsylvania County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	79	78	75	78	76	77	77
Math	80	75	79	78	82	80	84

Snap Shot Results - Calculations for 2018-2019 annual pass rates on Standards of Learning tests in reading and mathematics, were modified to reflect new federal reporting requirements. In other words, this data reflects a raw pass rate to include students that may have moved into the county, are new to the country, etc. Previously, these students were not counted in the data.

ESSA Results - The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires annual testing in reading in grades 3-8 and once during high school. Virginia’s ESSA implementation plan expects that by the 2023-2024 school year, at least 75 percent of all students, and of all students in the student groups listed in this table, will be able to demonstrate grade-level proficiency by passing state reading tests. Annual targets for student groups reflect improvement upon base-line performance from the 2015-2016 school year. Student groups meeting or exceeding annual or long-term targets must improve performance as compared to the previous year.

- Reading pass rates reported for high schools reflect the performance of a 12th-grade class of students who entered the ninth grade at the same time.
- Mathematics pass rates reported for high schools reflect the performance of a 12th-grade class of students who entered the ninth grade at the same time on one of the following state tests: Algebra I, Geometry or Algebra II.

Growth Results - SOL Growth Rates allow for students to demonstrate growth on SOL tests. For example, students that are considered recovery, growth, English Language learner progress, and substitute tests are included within the pass rates.

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Prince William County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	80	79	79	79	79	79	81
Math	79	76	83	78	83	80	85

Stafford County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	82	81	79	81	80	81	81
Math	82	80	84	81	85	83	87

Henrico County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	79	78	76	78	76	78	78
Math	78	76	81	78	81	79	84

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Fredericksburg City Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	74	67	63	67	64	68	67
Math	67	60	61	64	66	66	69

Caroline County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	72	72	72	73	72	72	72
Math	70	71	75	72	75	72	72

Louisa County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	77	77	77	78	77	77	79
Math	81	79	84	80	83	81	85

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Albemarle County Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	80	79	78	79	79	79	81
Math	77	76	81	79	84	81	86

Orange Public Schools							
Snap Shot				ESSA			Growth
	16-17	17-18	18-19	17-18	18-19	3 Year Rate	Current
Reading	80	79	78	79	78	79	80
Math	78	75	81	77	80	79	81

**ESTIMATE OF STAFF TIME SPENT ON RESPONSE:**