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HOUSE BILL NO. 1323

Offered January 16, 2026

A BILL to direct the Department of Education to revise the public school accountability system and performance framework and submit amendments to its consolidated state plan.

Patron—Reaser

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. That the Department of Education shall revise the public school accountability system adopted pursuant to 8-VAC20-132 of the Virginia Administrative Code, in accordance with the federal accountability provisions set forth in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. No. 89-10), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and its School Performance and Support Framework as necessary to:

1. Establish and implement by the 2026–2027 school year a fourth performance level, to be designated as "below basic," as an academic achievement indicator for those assessments with only three performance levels, including History and Social Science assessments and high school end-of-course assessments;

2. Delay until the 2026–2027 school year the implementation of the fourth performance level for Science in grades five and eight;

3. Establish as the preferred accountability measure for history and social science for the purposes of the mastery index the exclusive use of performance-based assessments;

4. Prohibit or eliminate the implementation of expanded middle school advance coursework such that students in middle school shall not be permitted to take (i) the high school world geography or world history I course and the applicable end-of-course assessment or (ii) the high school earth science course and the applicable end-of-course assessment;

5. Change from a "B" grade to a "C" grade the minimum grade required to earn 0.5 points in a Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps or equivalent leadership course under the 3E Readiness Framework developed as a part of the School Performance and Support Framework;

6. Eliminate the provision providing that any school identified for "targeted support and improvement" under the federal accountability system pursuant to ESSA shall have its performance category under the School Performance and Support Framework reduced by one level; and

7. Ensure that the refusal of any parent to have his child take any required Standards of Learning assessment does not impact the calculations for the mastery index for the purposes of measuring achievement, except to the extent necessary to ensure the school meets the required federal participation rate pursuant to ESSA.

The Department of Education shall, by September 1, 2026, submit to the U.S. Department of Education any amendments to its consolidated state plan under ESSA that are necessary to implement the provisions of this act.

§ 2. That the Department of Education shall develop and make available to schools and families by the beginning of the 2026–2027 school year clear, timely explanations for and guidance materials on the computation methodology for the vertical scaled scores and value tables implemented for use as a growth model for student assessments.