

**Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP)  
Teacher Review & Validation Study: Alignment  
Teacher Evaluation Survey  
Spring 2021  
Summary of Participants & Results**

Educators:  $n = 40$

Response Rate: 100%

Completion Rate: 100%

Recorded Dates: 03-31-2021 to 04-02-2021

### **Survey Participants**

In the spring of 2021, VDOE personnel recruited teachers to represent all eight regions of Virginia, and dozens of school divisions, with a total of 40 participating item alignment review process. Note that we only have participant information from 39 of the 40 teachers. These teachers held a variety of current positions, with all of them teaching in classrooms serving SWSCD or generic special education. All teachers had considerable experience teaching SWSCD, with 26 teachers having at least 10 years of experience ( $M = 12.64$  years; *Median* = 10 years; *Range* = 3 to 31 years). Most teachers taught across multiple grades and content areas, including in elementary, middle school, and/or high school settings in reading and language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies over the past couple of years. All teachers had at least one bachelor's degree in education, special education, or education-related field; 19 teachers had master's degrees, and 3 had doctorates in education. All teachers had certificates and/or endorsements in specific disabilities (emotional, intellectual, specific learning, blind and visual impairments), and some in specific grade levels (i.e., early and elementary education). Of the teachers who provided background information, 37 were female; 27 were White, 9 were Black or African American, 2 were Asian, and 1 did not report their race/ethnicity. Teachers' personal statements highlighted expertise in teaching academic content to students with significant cognitive disabilities, with many emphasizing development and use of adapted curriculum, behavioral supports, and embedded functional life skills.

### **Survey Method and Data Collection**

We designed the short survey to gather feedback from educators to improve items on the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) and the Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOL) for students with significant cognitive. The survey consisted of four selected-response prompts, each with dichotomous response options, and three constructed-response/open-ended prompts designed to elicit constructive feedback associated with each selected-response prompt. A fourth constructed-response/open-ended prompt at the end of the survey asked participating educators to give any additional comments about their experience as part of the study. The survey was conducted securely via the University of Oregon's Qualtrics Survey Software (<https://oregon.qualtrics.com>), with all responses collected and stored anonymously to encourage honesty and constructive/critical feedback from participating educators.

Below, we present the survey and associated results organized in the order that prompts were presented to study participants. Representative quotes are included and grouped based on patterns of constructive/critical comments and recommendations. For example, open-ended responses that were overly general have been removed.

## Survey Results

Welcome: Block Thank you for participating in the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) Teacher Alignment Study! The ratings and feedback you provided will help us improve test items and the Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOL) for students with significant cognitive.

Directions: To complete participation in the study, please take this short evaluation survey. The survey should take you about 5 minutes to complete and your responses are anonymous. The multiple-choice prompts are required. You may also give additional context and recommendations in the text boxes provided, with only the final prompt being required. Your responses will help improve the ongoing development and validation process for the VAAP.

Question Text	Response Counts (%)
Q2 - Rate the training you received for completing your review assignments.	Adequate = 40 (100%) Indequate = 0 (0%)
Q4 - Please give any recommendations for improving the training in which you participated.	**see quotes, below

### **Positive Comments:**

Training went well. Was probably more effective virtually than in-person

I thought this training was excellent and very informative for teachers going forward. I appreciate the openness and honesty of the process from Oregon and VDOE.

It was very organized, and I really appreciate you including us teachers in this process and taking our input, to make this a fit for all of our students that we work with.

It was very well put together , presentation platform was user friendly, and allowed for meaningful interaction among participants.

### **Constructive and/or critical comments/recommendations:**

we maybe could have used a little more time for the training

I wish this had been divided into 2 half days. It was a lot to take in at one time.

More test samples

Question Text	Response Counts (%)
<b>Q5</b> - Rate the usefulness of the Distributed Item Review (DIR) for reviewing and rating the alignment of test items to the Virginia Essentialized Standards of Learning (VESOL).	Useful = 40 (100%) Not useful = 0 (0%)
<b>Q6</b> - Please give any recommendations for improving the usefulness of the DIR.	**see quotes, below

**Positive Comments:**

The DIR was very easy to use and navigate.

Compared to previous VAAP alignment reviews I have participated in, this was the most simple.

DIR was very easy to use and organized well.

**Constructive and/or critical comments/recommendations:**

Perhaps an optional text box for the rating of a 2

Would the VESOL be able to be at the top of the page? Also, I a box for comments for scores of 2 would be helpful.

Possibly add a larger variety of VESOL's.

The only recommendation I would make is to include more visuals on the test questions.

Just for future test reviews, being able to see the standard above the test question would be helpful.

Question Text	Response Counts (%)
<b>Q3</b> - Rate the experience and support during the Breakout Room portion of the review and discussion (e.g., live support from study personnel, helpfulness of discussion).	Adequate = 40 (100%) Indequate = 0 (0%)
<b>Q16</b> - Please give any recommendations for improving the experience and support during the Breakout Room portion of the Teacher Alignment Study.	**see quotes, below

### **Positive Comments:**

Breakout Rooms were great

Support was amazing and helpful.

It was great to be able to have input into the questions. The feedback was very good and it was nice to see all of us on the same page.

great way to collaborate and discuss and great facilitator

The Breakout Room portion was very well explained, user friendly and feedback was appreciated

### **Constructive and/or critical comments/recommendations:**

Well facilitated breakout groups, just make sure all facilitators have the access level to the materials needed to lead the discussions

It would be good to spend more time reviewing items after we rate them.

There was A LOT of time to work through the DIR, especially Math but not enough time for discussion afterwards. Our discussion was really productive but it felt like it was cut a bit short

When reviewing each question it would have been more effective for the leader to first address the scores that were given. (Ex. All 5 people rated it a 2, 4 people agreed and 1 person disagreed, let's see why) before moving on to comments about wording/pictures etc about an item.

Question Text	Response Counts (%)
Q7 - Rate the overall quality of the Teacher Alignment Study (Training, Alignment Review in the DIR, Breakout Discussion).	Adequate = 40 (100%) Inadequate = 0 (0%)
Q8 - Please give any recommendations for improving the quality of the review process.	**see quotes, below

**Positive Comments:**

Overall great review process - having 6 people review and validate alignment scores is helpful to ensuring test item success when this rolled out next school year.

I really felt this was an awesome opportunity for us teacher to give our thoughts and input. Thank you for including us.

It was helpful to review the question the way they were presented.

I feel like my voice was important and was heard throughout the process. I appreciated being a part of the process to make sure it is going to be as successful as possible for my students. Thank you.

**Constructive and/or critical comments/recommendations:**

The biggest thing is to just make sure that the material is as aligned to the standards as possible. As teachers, we are used to tweaking our materials to the most exact word-for-word descriptions as possible. The details such as “and, or, with or without” are key words we are programed to be looking out for. The more specific, the better.

Just wanted a more variety of test questions not multiple questions of same question type.

Question Text	Response Counts (%)
<b>Q9</b> - Please share any additional comments about your experience as part of the Teacher Alingment Study.	**see quotes, below

**Positive Comments:**

It was great being part of this study! I appreciated the collaboration with colleagues and hearing the discussions taking place about the VESOLs, assessment items, and changes for the 2021-2022 school year!

Great experience! It was very obvious that a lot of work went into this. Very thankful that teachers were included in this process!

Appreciate all the work being done to help these special learners shine :)

This training was well organized. The expectations of the training was adequate. The trainer was knowledgeable of the content and provide excellent information.

I'm glad I could be a part of the alignment study. I have been doing the VAAP since the first year that it was implemented. I have watched it change throughout the years. I'm glad to see the questions incorporate functional life skills for our students.

It was very exciting to see that most teachers rated the the items simiarily!

**Constructive and/or critical comments/recommendations:**

I think that the use of more visuals, math manipulatives, and maybe multiple levels of difficulty as in Unique Curriculum.

I really liked that the standard would all be aligned and that there will common standards across the board. However, I wish some of these standard were more functional for our students, the focus of many of our programs is to gain and master functional life skills to be independent individuals within our communities. These standard do not focus on the important functional life skills that our students need, they focus on academic skills that are not applicable to their lives outside of the school environment.

Overall, I feel like my group did a great job discussing various pros and cons of today's activities. We do have some concerns about some of our struggling students being able to access this test when it targets such a wide range (IQ under 70 typically) and there are minimal visual supports. Some of our students are very dependent on a field of 2 and visually supported answers which this test does not fully accommodate.

Just wished the test questions were of different kinds. Multiple were of the same type in both the areas of Reading and Math.