



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

November 15, 2014

*Report on the Response of the  
Virginia Department of Education to the  
Impact of the Aging of Virginia's Population*

## **Executive Summary**

This report describes the impact that older Virginians have upon services provided by, and resources provided to, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the public school system in Virginia.

Part I. of the report includes a description, information, and enrollment data on the following programs available to Virginia's citizens age 60 and older:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Adult Secondary Education (ASE)
  - Adult High School Diploma Program
  - National External Diploma Program (NEDP)
  - General Achievement Adult High School Diploma (GAAHSD)
- General Educational Development Programs (GED).

Enrollment data for these programs demonstrate a downward statewide enrollment trend for adults over age 60 from 2007 to 2014, with ESOL programs becoming the program with the highest enrollment among ABE, ESOL, and ASE programs.

In addition to providing educational services to the aging population in Virginia, VDOE also oversees programs to address the impact of aging on the work force of Virginia's public schools and the agency itself. Part II of the report features instructional and leadership programs designed to help develop new education professionals to replace those retiring or leaving the field, and Part III contains information about the impact on the agency's work force and its public communication efforts.

As the size of Virginia's adult population over age 60 continues to grow, it will be important for state and local governments and public school systems in Virginia to inform this population about the importance of maintaining a strong public education system throughout the state and provide ways to engage this population in supporting public education in Virginia.

## **Agency Description**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is the administrative agency for the Commonwealth's public K-12 schools. VDOE provides the staff and other resources to implement the constitutional and statutory requirements placed on the Board of Education.

The staff of the Department of Education promote leadership and service among administrators and educators who teach the children enrolled in Virginia's public schools. The department also provides resources and services that directly impact children and their schools, including:

- Distributing funds and providing assistance to school divisions in accounting, budget, pupil transportation, school nutrition programs, facilities and energy and procurement;
- Assisting school divisions in the design and implementation of instructional programs;
- Assisting the Board, the Governor and the General Assembly in the development of legislation, regulations and policies that promote student achievement;
- Providing timely and accurate information about public education;
- Providing expertise and leadership regarding special education in professional development, parental involvement, and the interpretation of federal and state initiatives, policies, regulations and guidelines;
- Managing test development, administration, scoring and reporting of results for statewide assessment programs;
- Implementing regulations governing Virginia's approved education preparation programs and regulations for the licensure of school personnel;
- Providing training workshops, professional development and technical assistance related to school finances, facilities, pupil transportation, special education, instruction, assessment, teacher education and licensure, student support, school health, career and technical education, and technology issues;
- Reporting required data and information to state and federal officials; and
- Managing and analyzing education data.

The vision of the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Board of Education, local school boards, and other partners, is to create an excellent statewide system of public education that equips all students with the knowledge and skills to excel in postsecondary education and careers and to become capable, responsible, and self-reliant citizens.

The mission of the Department of Education is to lead and facilitate the development and implementation of a quality public education system that meets the needs of students and assists them in becoming educated, productive, and responsible citizens.

## I. Services for Virginia Seniors

The Office of Adult Education and Literacy, located in the Virginia Department of Education, Division of Instruction, provides leadership and oversight to adult education programs and services in Virginia. This office manages federal and state funds allocated for these programs. The programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and High School Equivalency programs (Virginia currently oversees the General Educational Development Program [GED<sup>®</sup>].)

Although the *Code of Virginia* places the responsibility for adult education with Virginia's 132 local school divisions, services are delivered through a partnership of public and community-based providers that includes local school boards; community colleges; not-for-profit and faith-based literacy groups; employers; state, local and regional correctional facilities; and state institutions.

**Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs** consist of instruction that provides basic skills for adults who are performing below the ninth-grade level in reading, writing, mathematics, and other basic skills. All interested qualified persons are served, regardless of age.

**English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Programs** consist of instruction designed to increase the English proficiency of limited English proficient (LEP) adults in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Many programs also include civics related instructional activities such as health, family, and financial literacy. All interested qualified persons are served, regardless of age.

**Adult Secondary Education (ASE) Programs** provide adults with the opportunity to earn a high school credential. All interested qualified persons are served, regardless of age. Three programs are offered in Virginia to serve this need, including:

- **The Adult High School Diploma Program** enables an adult no longer enrolled in public education to complete the required courses/activities to earn an Adult High School diploma, with the local high school scheduling classes and determining course requirements in accordance with standards established by the state.
- **The National External Diploma Program (NEDP)** is a program developed for adults, 21 and above, who have not had recent schooling or test-taking experience but now have acquired high school level academic skills in other than curriculum-based programs. It is an adult applied-performance, competency-based assessment program that awards an adult high school diploma to skilled adults who have acquired many of their high school level abilities in a series of simulations that parallel job and life situations. They are evaluated according to established performance criteria. It is an assessment program and

not an instructional program. In addition, students are awarded an Adult High School diploma rather than an equivalency certificate.

- **The General Achievement Adult High School Diploma (GAAHSD)** is intended to provide a diploma option for high school dropouts and individuals who exit high school without a diploma. This diploma is intended for individuals who are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in public school or not otherwise meeting the compulsory school attendance requirements set forth in the *Code of Virginia*. The requirements for the GAAHSD include prescribed standard units of credit and a passing score on the General Educational Development (GED® examination). Standard credits required for the GAAHSD may be earned in a variety of educational settings, including a public school; a community college or other institution of higher education; an adult high school program; or correspondence, distance learning, and online courses.

The GAAHSD is not meant to be a "first option" for high school students. Diploma candidates may be individuals who are of age to enroll in a public school whether they choose to enroll or not; or individuals who because of their age are not eligible to enroll in a public school.

**General Educational Development Program (GED®)** enables persons who have not graduated from high school to demonstrate the attainment of abilities normally associated with completion of a high school program of study. The Virginia GED® program provides an opportunity to recognize the educational development of individuals as a result of their life and/or employment experiences.

### **Enrollment Data for Persons Age 60 and Older**

Age-specific enrollment data are available for the Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, and English for Speakers of Other Languages. Enrollment data for the programs for participants age 60 and above are shown on the following page. Enrollment data for other adult education and literacy programs described above are not reported by age.

**Enrollment in ABE, ASE, and ESOL Programs Statewide  
(Persons Age 60 and Older)  
FY 2007-2008 through FY 2013-2014**

<b>Data Factor</b>	<b>FY 2007 2008</b>	<b>FY 2008 2009</b>	<b>FY 2009 2010</b>	<b>FY 2010 2011</b>	<b>FY 2011 2012</b>	<b>FY 2012 2013</b>	<b>FY 2013 2014*</b>
<b>TOTAL STATE ENROLLMENT (ALL AGES)</b>	30,940	31,085	29,802	28,220	24,898	24,163	22,902
<b>TOTAL ENROLLED (AGE 60 AND OLDER)</b>	1,052	976	932	939	892	887	817
<b>ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY (AGE 60 AND OLDER)</b>							
American Indian or Alaskan Native	6	9	5	6	5	4	4
Asian	156	142	147	189	169	163	164
Black or African American	392	351	307	326	301	285	281
Hispanic or Latino	186	186	178	169	162	192	145
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0	1	1	1	0	0
Two or More Races**	---	---	---	4	2	7	5
White	312	288	294	244	252	236	218
<b>ENROLLMENT BY GENDER (AGE 60 AND OLDER)</b>							
Female	684	615	614	587	557	554	515
Male	368	361	318	352	335	333	302
<b>ENROLLMENT BY PROGRAM TYPE (AGE 60 AND OLDER)</b>							
Adult Basic Education (ABE)	515	481	442	400	408	393	376
Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	72	54	54	54	43	32	23
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	465	441	436	485	441	462	418

\* Although the results for 2013-2014 are preliminary, they are likely to be similar to the final values reported to the United States Department of Education (USED) in December 2014.

\*\* USED began tracking adult enrollment totals for students identified as being of two or more races in 2010-2011.

## II. Instructional And Leadership Programs Designed To Help Develop New Education Professionals To Replace Those Retiring Or Leaving The Field

With the need to continue to increase the pool of qualified applicants for teaching and administration/supervision positions due to retirements and individuals leaving the profession, various routes to licensure have been established by the Virginia Board of Education.

### Teacher Preparation Programs

Virginia has 36 institutions of higher education that offer approved teacher preparation programs. Colleges and universities offering programs must be regionally accredited. The programs must be nationally accredited or accredited by a Board of Education process, and each endorsement program must be approved by the Board of Education.

TEACHER PROGRAM COMPLETERS Source Title II Reports	
Year	Number of Program Completers
2010-2011	3,745
2011-2012	3,828

In addition to teachers completing an approved preparation program through a college or university, individuals may be eligible for a license through reciprocity or an alternative route to licensure. The *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* set forth the criteria for alternative routes – provisional licensure route; experiential learning, provisional (special education) route, and the Career Switcher Program.

### Retirees Employed in K-12 Critical Shortage Positions

A retiree may teach or serve as a principal or assistant principal in a designated critical shortage position and continue to receive retirement benefits, provided the retiree:

- Is [licensed] by the Virginia Board of Education for the position he or she will hold;
- Has a break in service of at least 12 consecutive months between the retirement date and the date of hire in a critical shortage position. This break means not working in any full-time, part-time or temporary position with any VRS-participating employer;
- Has not retired with a reduced VRS benefit under an early retirement incentive program (ERIP); and

- Has not taken a refund of member contributions and interest or deferred retirement.

Critical shortage positions are temporary and designated for the current school year only. School superintendents designate positions as critical shortage according to guidelines established by the Virginia Department of Education.

By November 1 of each school year, school divisions that are employing critical shortage personnel must complete and return to VRS an eligibility certificate to VRS for each individual. School divisions that are not employing critical shortage personnel must submit a Certification of Non-Participation of Critical Shortage Teachers and Administrators (VRS-160A)

[Source: <http://www.varetire.org/employers/retirees-returning-to-work/k-12-critical-shortage-positions.asp>]

### **Administration and Supervision**

Twenty Virginia colleges and universities offer programs in administration and supervision. Individuals also may be eligible based on reciprocity. The *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* stipulate the requirements for two alternate routes for the administration and supervision endorsement when requested by a Virginia division superintendent.

### **Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy**

The Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy is designed for educators who aspire to be in a leadership position and who are not currently a special education director. Individuals must be nominated and complete an application to be considered for selection into this Academy. This program was established to assist school divisions and state-operated programs with succession planning and is designed to help prepare potential leaders for future administrative positions in special education. This is a yearlong program that includes workshops, seminars, observations, assignments and field experiences. Participants have opportunities to gain knowledge, skills and experiences that will help them excel in positions of special education leadership.

### **New Special Education Directors Academy**

The New Special Education Directors Academy offers seminars throughout the year addressing relevant topics in-depth for new directors. A new special education director is defined as one who is new to the position and has not been a special education director in another Virginia location, or was new after last year's Academy. The Academy includes information on a variety of topics including state and federal data collection and reporting procedures, the annual plan process, changes to policies and regulations, Standards of Learning (SOL) instructional resources, as well as the use of assigned mentors.

Many of the actions associated with the above initiatives are resource based, intended to ensure full staffing of the school divisions and state operated programs, with trained, dedicated, and motivated leaders to address regulatory compliance and improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Constraints to these activities relate to funding, available skill sets and ability of the Virginia Department of Education to retain qualified staff to provide leadership for these initiatives.

**Number of Participants in the Special Education Leadership Academies  
FY 2008 through 2014**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>Total</b>
Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy	NA <sup>1</sup>	29	30	29	30	34	30	182
New Special Education Directors Academy <sup>2</sup>	33	14	14	21	21	19	17	139

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<sup>1</sup> 2008-09 was the first year for the Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy.

<sup>2</sup> Data includes only the new special education administrators, not their mentors.

## **PART III – Impact of aging population on the Virginia Department of Education and the services it provides to the public**

### **“Consumer-Oriented” Publications and Web sites**

The Virginia Department of Education Web site ([www.doe.virginia.gov](http://www.doe.virginia.gov)) was redesigned in 2009 with a mandated focus on a user-centric format. The Web site follows state Web site usability guidelines and is 100-percent compliant with the current Virginia State Agency Accessibility Scorecard.

The agency has dedicated staff to keep the site up-to-date and a user guide is available (see link at the bottom of the home page) to help visitors understand the navigation system and locate information. The Web site includes report cards for schools and school divisions and other reports on the performance of Virginia public schools.

VDOE publications are typically available as PDF documents accessible from the Web site so readers can enlarge their views to the font size that is most comfortable.

### **Work Force Retirement Impact on Agency**

The Department of Education has a work force with a higher average age (52.4 years old) than the overall State work force (46.2 years old), and has a high number of employees eligible for full, unreduced retirement.

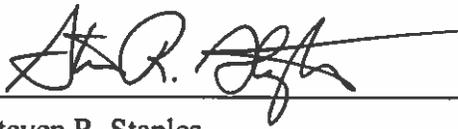
Within the next five years (2015 – 2020) it is projected that 42.9 percent of the Department’s work force will be eligible for unreduced retirement. The figures from retirements from past two years however, suggests a rate of actual retirement that over the next two years may involve 5.9% of the current DOE work force, or approximately 16 employees. Of course, all retirements do not occur from the pool of those eligible for unreduced retirement, and predicting who will retire is prone to a certain degree of error.

Critical shortages from expected retirements and turnover within the next two years necessitate a detailed succession plan for all shortage areas. The expected drain of experience, knowledge and skills and an increase in the demand for services will further test the Department’s ability to keep an adequate and qualified work force. The Department of Education is actively involved in succession planning and recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts to meet the current and future work force needs of the Department.

Many of the actions associated with these initiatives are resource based, intended to ensure that the Department of Education is fully staffed, and that it has trained, dedicated, and motivated employees to fulfill the Department’s vision and goals, now and in the future. Constraints to

these activities relate to funding, available skill sets and the ability of state agencies to retain a qualified work force.

Pursuant to Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-5510 and 51.5-136, the Virginia Department of Education submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.



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Dr. Steven R. Staples  
Superintendent

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Designated agency official responsible for reviewing policy and programs and accommodating the interests of older adults and adults with disabilities under Code of Virginia § 2.2-604.1:

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