

Update on Local Alternative Assessment Plans

Report to the Virginia Board of Education

April 23, 2015

Background: Legislative Mandate

Legislation in the 2014 General Assembly amended [§ 22.1-253.13:3.C](#) of the *Code of Virginia* to eliminate several Standards of Learning (SOL) tests:

- Grade 3 History,
- Grade 3 Science,
- Grade 5 Writing,
- United States History to 1865, and
- United States History: 1865 to the Present.

Requirements for Local Alternative Assessments

The legislation requires each local school board to

- annually certify that it has provided instruction in the content assessed by the eliminated tests and
- administered an alternative assessment, consistent with Virginia Board of Education guidelines, to students in grades three through eight in each SOL subject area in which the SOL assessment was eliminated.

Guidelines for Local Assessments

- Approved by Virginia Board of Education on September 18, 2014
- Developed with extensive input from educators over the past several months
- Focus on flexibility and control at local level
- Guidelines recognize that the legislation's timeline provides school divisions with an immediate deadline to implement the local assessments.

Development or Selection of Assessments

- The development and/or selection of the local assessments are left to the discretion of the school division.
- School divisions may use a combination of several different assessments for each grade and content area to meet the requirement of the legislation, or they may choose a specific test or assessment method.
- Local school divisions may choose to administer the same assessments for particular grade levels and content areas to all students in the division or allow more flexibility at the school level in selecting the assessments.



Plans for Use of Local Assessments

- School divisions were asked to prepare plans that describe how local assessments designed to inform instruction will be implemented in 2014-2015 as well as how their use will be expanded in 2015-2016 and beyond.

Survey of Division Plans

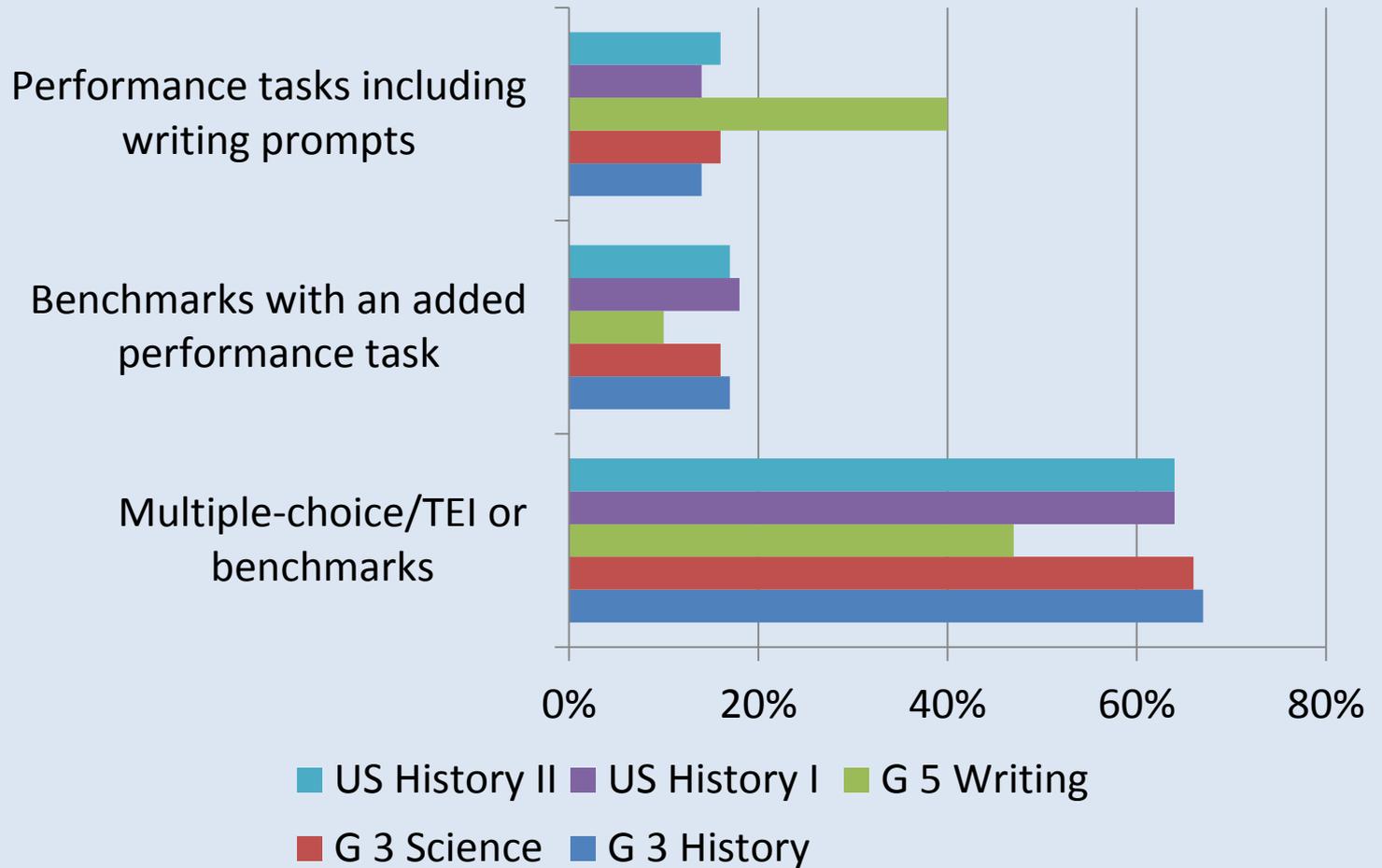
On November 21, 2014, school divisions were sent a survey regarding their plans for meeting the local alternative assessment requirements for 2014-2015 as well as any plans for change for 2015-2016. Surveys were due by January 30, 2015.

111 out of 132 divisions responded

Common Assessments

90% of divisions reported that they are administering a common local assessment.

Types of locally developed assessments to be administered.



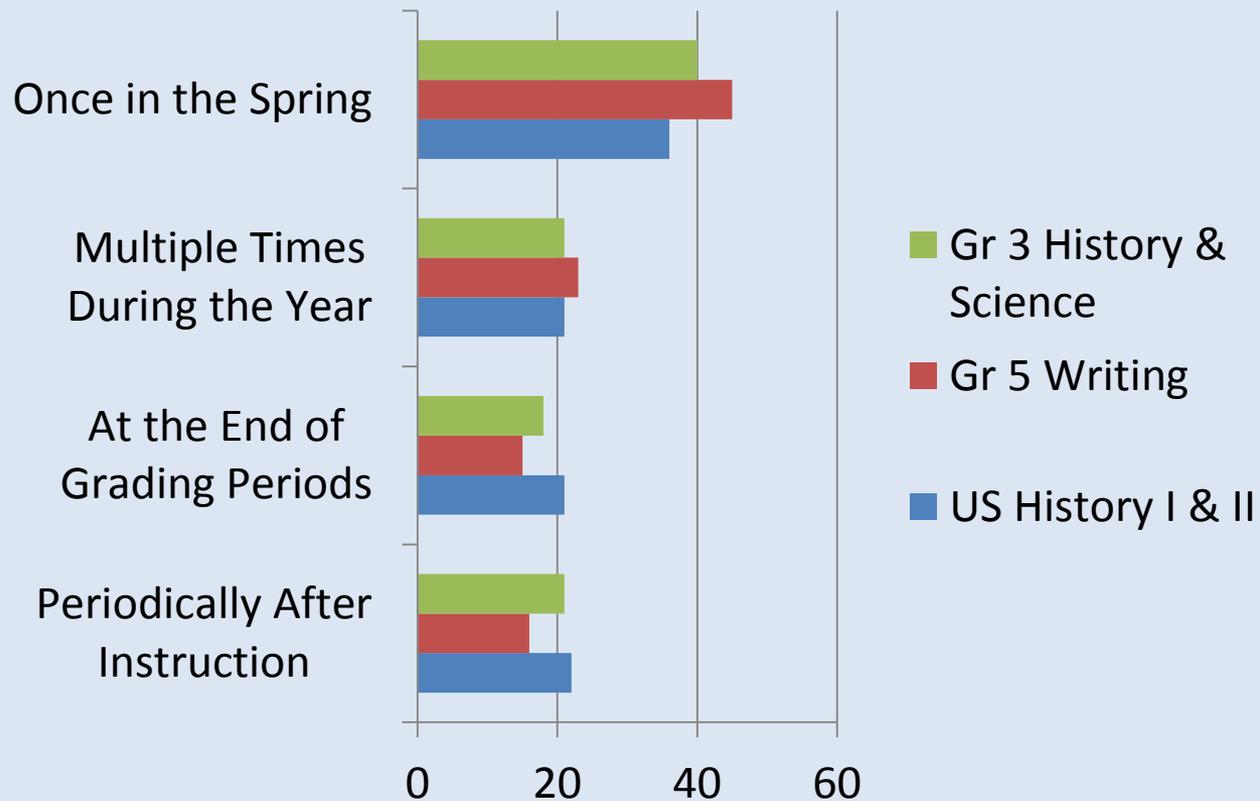
Sample Excerpts from Local Alternative Assessment Plans

1. End of unit authentic performance assessments that provide a context for students to demonstrate their capacity to transfer course content, skills, and procedures to real-world scenarios requiring higher-level reasoning, problem solving, and decision making. The assessments are holistically scored by teachers using locally developed rubrics.
2. The US History II Local Assessment is a combination of an online multiple choice test developed by teachers during Summer 2014 and a writing prompt that addresses US History II content. The US History 2 Writing Prompt/Short Paper will be assessed for content by a team of history teachers and assessed for writing skills by English teachers (grades 6-8, based on the 8th grade Writing Rubric).
3. Our division has developed a portfolio based system that allows students to select artifacts that demonstrate mastery of standards and strands. Student goal setting is a direct component as well as self assessment with teacher guidance.

Sample Excerpts from Local Alternative Assessment Plans

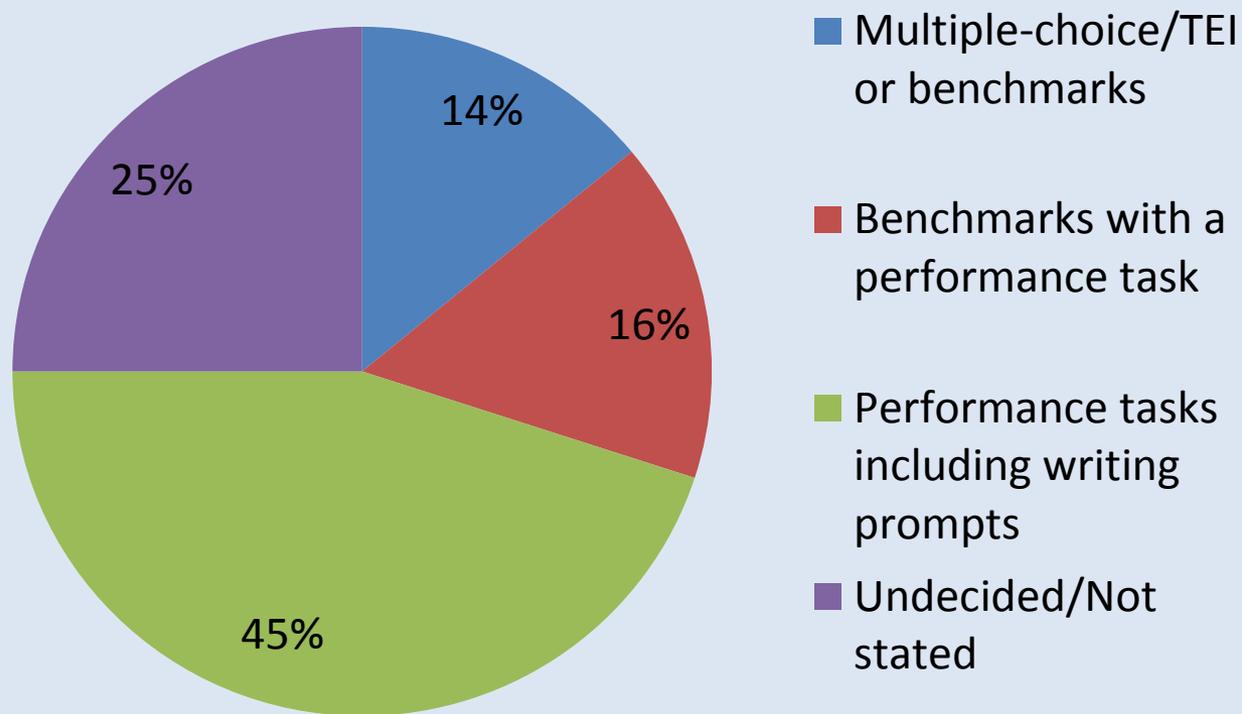
4. 50% of the student score will be derived from a Writing Across the Curriculum Project. History and science students will be asked to create a project based on the curriculum. The project will be graded using a predetermined rubric.
5. Students have been asked to create and develop a project based on curriculum content, create artifacts (e.g., time-line and map), and deliver an oral presentation, i.e., share their findings and work with their classmates.
6. Our assessments will be a combination of performance assessments and what we're calling "expanded formative assessment" for the 2014-15 school year. "Expanded formative assessments" are designed to cover breadth of knowledge, emphasizing question types with rigor levels beyond that of traditional multiple choice format: constructed response, open-ended, test questions that reflect technology enhanced items, etc.

When the Local Assessment is Being Administered



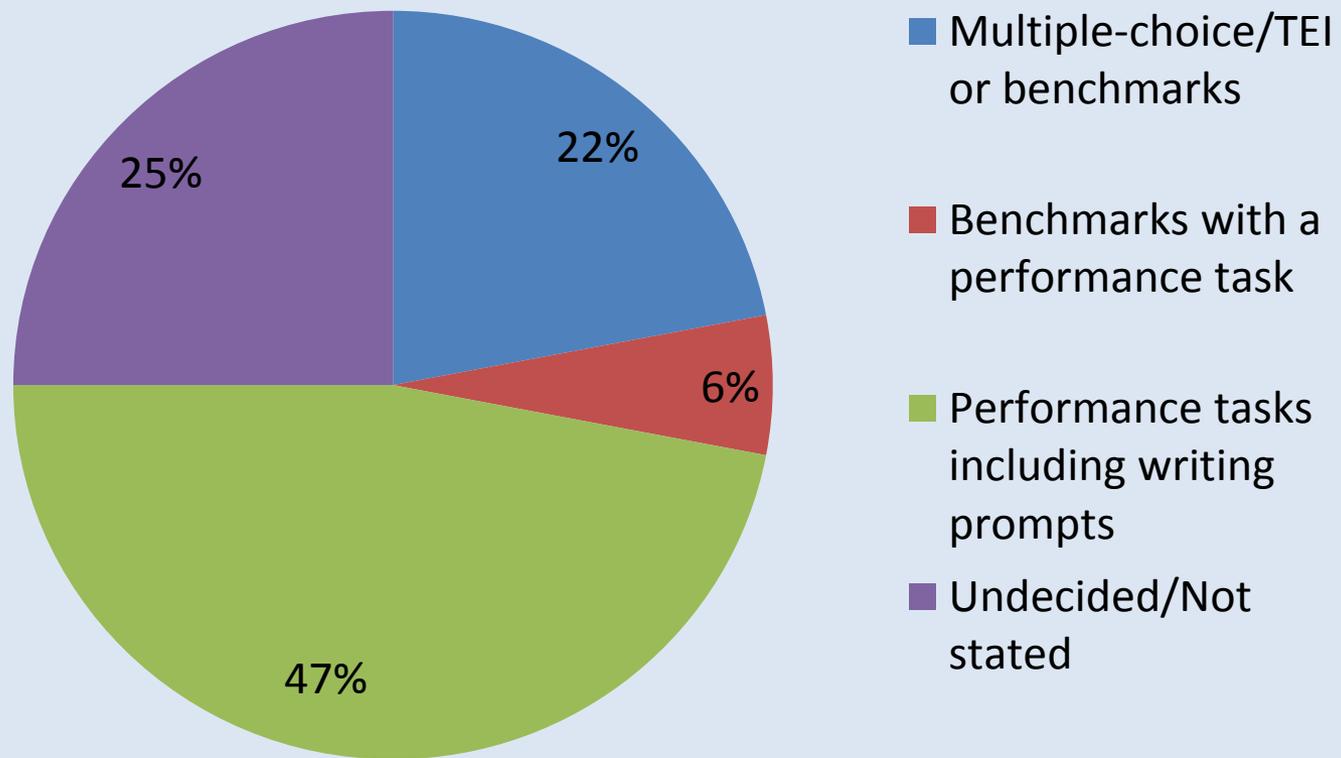
Plans for the 2015-2016 School Year and Beyond

Grade 3 History & Science



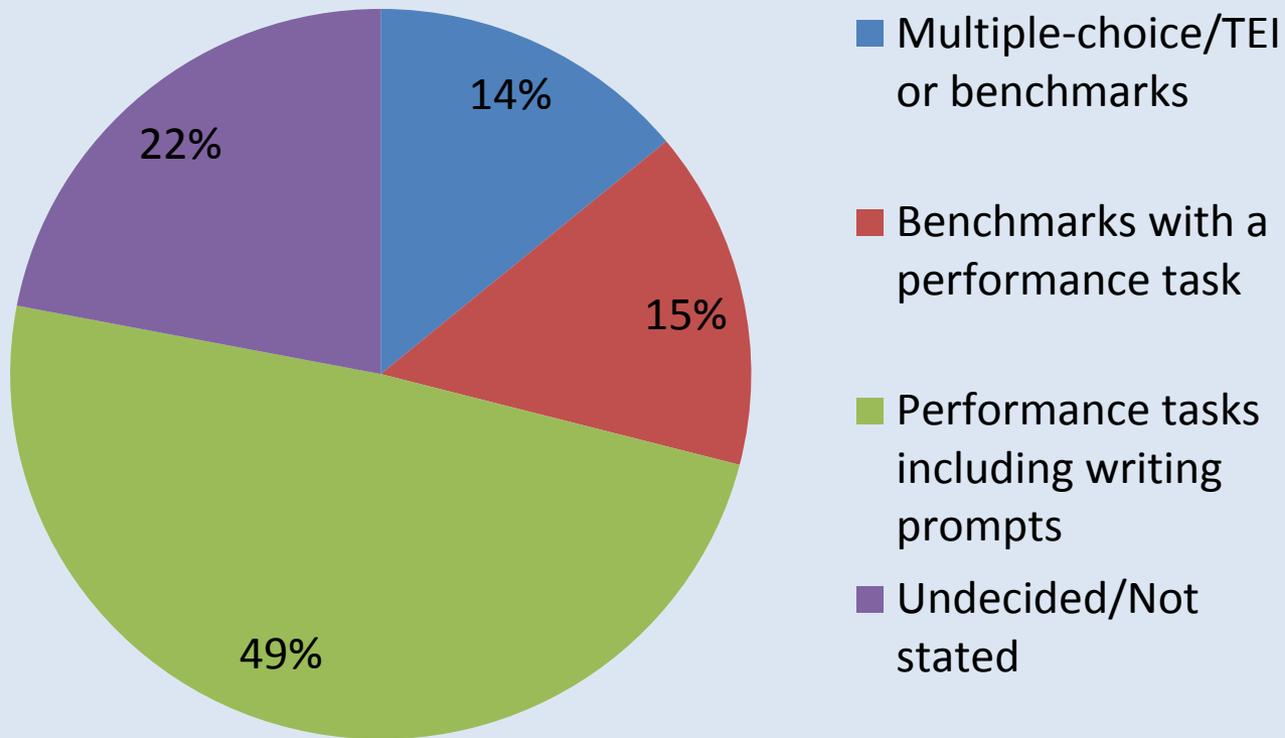
Plans for the 2015-2016 School Year and Beyond

Grade 5 Writing



Plans for the 2015-2016 School Year and Beyond

US History I & II



2014-2015 School Year

- 111 out of 132 divisions responded to the survey
- 90% are using common division tests
- 60% of the divisions are using standard multiple-choice/TEI or benchmark tests; for writing 45% are using some form of performance task
- 60% are using a combination of tests rather than a single cumulative test
- 65% of divisions are using a vendor to help in the development and/or delivery of the local alternative assessments.

2015-2016 School Year

- 90% of the respondents indicated they are planning to revise their local alternative assessment for next year and beyond
- The majority of the divisions mention the need to use a vendor or other outside source to help develop better local alternative assessments
- The use of an all-performance-based test is projected to increase about 30% in the history and science tests; writing indicates a 10% increase

Excerpts from Plans for 2015-2016

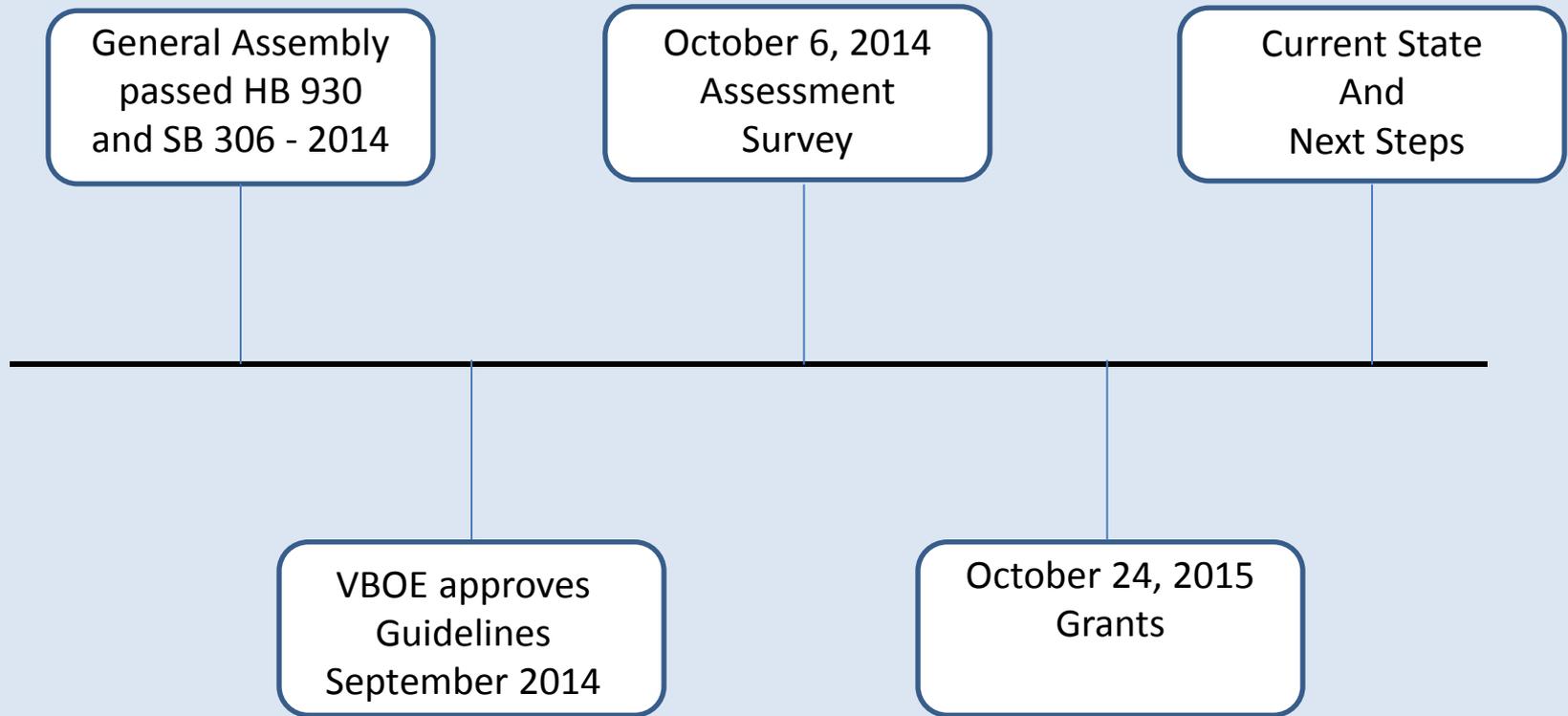
1. We are currently in the process of developing these assessments and attending formal trainings on performance assessment. The Social Studies standards are changing so we'll need to adjust the history assessments.
2. We plan to reflect on this year's experience once complete and move toward a local assessment model that is even heavier on the performance assessment side.

Excerpts from Plans for 2015-2016

3. Beginning spring 2015, selected teachers will receive professional development in the creation of performance assessments and rubrics. They will convene in spring and early summer to convert the existing local assessments into performance assessments with rubrics. These assessments will be administered division-wide quarterly.
4. The plan for next year is to implement one performance based assessment during the 3rd quarter. The PBA will be problem-based and provide students with choices on the tasks. A common Division rubric will be used to evaluate the PBA to ensure consistency.

Support Provided by the Virginia Department of Education

Timeline of Assistance Provided



Grants to Superintendents' Regions

Region	Division Acting as Fiscal Agent	Total Requested	Potential Additional Funding	Total
Region I	Hanover County	\$13,000	\$5,000	\$18,200
Region II	Hampton City	\$14,000	\$7,250	\$21,250
Region III	Fredericksburg City	\$14,000		\$14,000
Region IV	Fairfax County	\$14,000	\$12,750	\$26,750
Region V	Fluvanna County	\$14,000		\$14,000
Region VI	Franklin County	\$14,000		\$14,000
Region VII	Wise County	\$14,000		\$14,000
Region VIII	Cumberland County	\$14,000		\$14,000
	TOTALS	\$111,000	\$25,000	\$136,000

Current State

- Region I – Differentiating professional development since divisions are in different places - some divisions are already piloting
- Region II – Working with Dr. Chris Gareis and Old Dominion University, The George Washington University to develop tasks as a region – share fall this summer
- Regions III - Working with Dr. Chris Gareis and creating performance tasks for each reporting category for every test eliminated

Current State

- Region IV – Working with Dr. Chris Gareis, Kristina Doubet, and Eric Carbaugh and held Performance Assessment Symposium
- Region V – Worked with Dr. Sally l’Anson, Interactive Achievement and differentiating throughout the divisions, each at different places
- Region VI – Working with Dr. Chris Gareis, Kristina Doubet, and Eric Carbaugh to develop performance tasks that represent reporting categories

Current State

- Region VII – Creating interdisciplinary performance tasks as a region with a focus on writing, science, and social studies
- Region VIII – Working with Chris Gareis and staff at William & Mary to review and critique performance tasks

Next Steps

- Provide additional grant funds for 2015 – 2016 school year
- September 15 – all Regions will provide a summary of progress on the development of performance assessments and how additional funds will be used to support this work
- October 5th and 6th – Performance Assessment Summit in Roanoke sponsored by VASCD, VASS, VSUP, and VDOE

Next Steps

- Planning to conduct desk reviews during the summer; limiting the use of site visits
- Beginning to collect documentation for the local alternative assessments from selected divisions across the regions
- Requesting copies of tests and ancillary materials as outlined in the guidelines
- Planning to collect cost estimates from school divisions