



For Immediate Release: August 21, 2013

Contact: Charles B. Pyle, Director of Communications, (804) 371-2420
Julie C. Grimes, Communications Manager, (804) 225-2775

Virginia Students Make Across-the-Board Gains on ACT
Commonwealth's Students Buck National Drop in Achievement

Virginia students increased their achievement and outperformed their peers nationwide by significant margins on the ACT this year as the number of the commonwealth's high school seniors taking the college-admissions examination continued to grow.

The commonwealth's public school students achieved a composite score of 22.4, compared with 20.9 for public school graduates nationwide. The performance of Virginia public school students improved on all components of the ACT while the achievement of their peers nationwide was down across the board.

"As more Virginia students take the ACT, its importance — as an external indicator of the effectiveness of policies and standards promoting college readiness — increases," Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright said. "The scores of 2013 graduates continue the upward trend we have seen since Virginia students began taking the ACT in larger numbers in recent years."

Table with 11 columns: Year, English (VA, US), Mathematics (VA, US), Reading (VA, US), Science (VA, US), Composite (VA, US). Rows for years 2009-2013.

The percentage of Virginia public school students meeting ACT college-readiness benchmarks was 10 or more points higher than the percentages nationwide. The benchmarks identify students whose scores indicate that they are prepared for first-year college English composition, reading, algebra and biology. ACT's adjustments this year to the benchmark scores in reading and science impacted the college-ready percentages in those subjects.

Table with 11 columns: Year, English (VA, US), Mathematics (VA, US), Reading (VA, US), Science (VA, US), Meeting all 4 (VA, US). Rows for years 2009-2013.

During 2013, participation in ACT testing among Virginia public school graduates increased by more than 2 percent: 18,708 of Virginia's graduating public school seniors took the ACT, compared with 18,298 in 2012.

(more)

The overall composite score for Virginia high school graduates — public, private and homeschooled — was 22.6, compared with 20.9 for graduates nationwide. Twenty-six percent of all 2013 Virginia graduates took the ACT, up from 25 percent the year before.

ACT results are reported on a scale of 1 to 36, with 36 being the highest possible score. Fifteen 2013 Virginia graduates achieved perfect scores on the test.

Virginia All Students School Average ACT Scores										
Year	English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Composite	
	VA	US	VA	US	VA	US	VA	US	VA	US
2009	21.7	20.6	21.8	21.0	22.3	21.4	21.4	20.9	21.9	21.1
2010	22.0	20.5	22.1	21.0	22.5	21.3	21.9	20.9	22.3	21.0
2011	22.1	20.6	22.2	21.1	22.7	21.3	21.8	20.9	22.3	21.1
2012	22.1	20.5	22.3	21.1	22.7	21.3	21.9	20.9	22.4	21.1
2013	22.3	20.2	22.5	20.9	23.1	21.1	22.2	20.7	22.6	20.9

Percentage of All Virginia Students Meeting ACT College-Readiness Benchmarks										
Year	English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Meeting all 4	
	VA	US	VA	US	VA	US	VA	US	VA	US
2009	74	67	49	42	59	53	33	28	27	23
2010	76	66	53	43	61	52	37	29	31	24
2011	76	66	55	45	61	52	36	30	32	25
2012	76	67	56	46	63	52	38	31	33	25
2013	76	64	57	44	57	44	47	36	37	26

While the number of Virginia students taking the ACT continues to grow, the SAT — published by the College Board — remains the dominant college-admissions test in the commonwealth.

###