VKRP
Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program

November 2026

Mathematics, Self-Regulation, Social Skills, and Mental Health Well-Being Assessment Pilot: Grades 1-3

Overview



VKRP Background

The Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), has developed longitudinal measures of mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being to assess children's early skills in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. These measures complement Virginia's use of language and literacy screeners in Grades Pre-K through 8 (Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System, VALLSS) administered by Virginia Literacy Partnerships (VLP).

Why is VKRP/VDOE conducting the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot?

As required by Virginia's 2022-2024, 2024-2026, and 2026-2028 Biennial Budgets, researchers at the University of Virginia, including teams from VKRP and VLP, are conducting a Mathematics, Self-Regulation, Social Skills, and Mental Health Well-Being Assessment Pilot to explore the utility of building longitudinal measures in those areas that could extend current VKRP measures to Grades 1 through 3 (referred to as the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot).

Teachers, school divisions, and families across Virginia have expressed interest in better understanding students' development as they progress beyond kindergarten. Currently, there are no statewide assessments for mathematics, self-regulation, or social skills for students in first through third grade.

- **Limited statewide measures:** With the exception of literacy, Virginia has no statewide assessments of early learning in Grades 1 and 2.
- **Lack of continuity:** There is no system to monitor student growth within or across years from Pre-K through Grade 3 (aside from Grade 3 mathematics growth assessments).
- **Varying local practices:** Divisions vary widely in their approach to student assessment in the early grades.

Filling in the Gaps

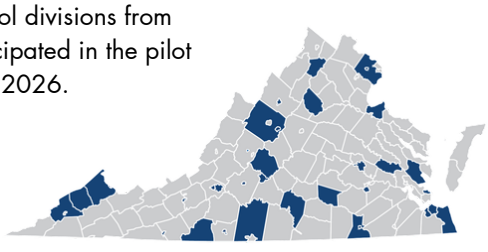
This pilot fills in gaps to track growth and better understand students' development in the early elementary grades beyond language and literacy.



What are the goals of the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot?

1. Understand current assessment practices
2. Gather stakeholder perspectives
3. Test pilot assessments and develop resources
4. Inform next steps for broader implementation of assessments

Over 30 school divisions from Virginia participated in the pilot from 2022 to 2026.



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What has the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot accomplished to date?

Phase 1 — **2022-2023**

- Gathered information about existing assessments.
- Evaluated current interest in state-supported assessments for mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being.

Phase 2 — **2023-2025**

- Expanded the Early Mathematics Assessment System (EMAS) and adapted the Child Behavior Rating Scale (CBRS) to measure Grades 1 through 3 students' mathematics, social skills, self-regulation, and mental health well-being.

Phase 3 — **2025-2026**

- Tested the reliability, validity, and feasibility of the EMAS and CBRS assessments with over 160 teachers and 2,700 students in Grades 1 through 3.

Pilot findings suggest that extending VKRP assessments into Grades 1 through 3 is feasible and could provide valuable insights into students' mathematics, self-regulation, social skills, and mental health well-being throughout early elementary school.

Mathematics



Self-Regulation and Social Skills



Mental Health Well-Being



What's next for the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot?

- Build the Grades 1 through 3 assessments in Virginia Connects for Kids (VAConnects).
- Develop initial Grades 1 through 3 reports that translate assessment results into useful information for teachers, families, schools, and divisions.
- Develop Grades 1 through 3 training materials on assessment administration.
- Continue refining the EMAS and CBRS in Grades 1 through 3 by piloting assessments with teachers.
- Adapt and develop resources that help teachers connect assessment information with instruction.

The Grade 1-3 assessments could be made available at scale for all Virginia school divisions on a voluntary opt-in basis as early as fall 2028.

Teacher Testimonials

"The mathematics assessment was completely aligned with our second grade SOLs. It was nice to see my students think about the problem and how to solve it. It also helped me see who needs more support in different areas."

"This would be an excellent tool to use to measure student growth at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the school year."

"Overall, I hope this is an assessment that we will have access to in the future for first and second grade students considering we currently do not have a common assessment that measures growth in math."

The Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot is funded by the Virginia General Assembly and implemented by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Literacy Partnerships, and Virginia school divisions. Initial funding for the development and piloting of VKRP and ongoing support and advocacy including the Grades 1-3 Assessment Pilot has been provided by Elevate Early Education (E3).