



**The Fairfax County Democratic Committee
Urges Virginia Officials to Realign Standards of Learning with Real-World
Demands**

Whereas,

Under the current one-size-fits all Standards of Learning (SOLs), students who are not in the academic top tier are humiliated by academic failure rather than helped to experience success in the next steps toward a career of their choosing. Under the SOLs, teachers are also constrained from fully helping students of color achieve their best, thereby jeopardizing equity.

The one-size-fits all standards also hamper teachers in their efforts to give adequate support to those with outstanding diverse talents, including academic, and fail to offer all students enough opportunities to move far ahead in specialized diverse pathways.

We can see the alarming damage done to students by the constraints of the one-size fits all SOLs. Recently, 8.5% of Virginia students fail to graduate high school on time, while 20% who start 4-year colleges fail to graduate within 6 years, and 55% of those who start 2-year colleges fail to graduate within 6 years. While these are better than national averages (15%, 33%, and 59%, respectively), when we consider that 29% of Virginia students go on to 2-year, and 43% to 4-year colleges, it means that a third of students in Virginia have not been effectively prepared for and adequately supported in their next steps beyond high school.

When we add those from ages 16-24 who in neither in an educational program nor the work force, and are, thereby, effectively abandoned (11.7% nationally), we can see the full, alarming picture: the current one-size-fits-all SOL standards seriously hamper students in their efforts to explore the diverse pathways of over 12,000 different careers and to choose and prepare for their individual next steps beyond high school.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County Democratic Committee urges Virginia's General Assembly and Governor to establish a commission to realign the SOLs and relevant diploma notations with the diversity of skills necessary to meet the post-high school demands of higher education, careers and trades, including apprenticeships.