



Virginia Is For Learners Lead Innovation Network

Cohort 3.0 Overview and Summary
July 2021 - June 2022



Ted Dintersmith's
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I. Introduction

Virginia began bipartisan work to innovate educational outcomes and accountability systems in 2013 under the leadership of the Secretary of Education, Laura Fornash. In 2014, House Delegate Tag Greason introduced HB 930 to reform Standards of Learning Assessments in grades 3-8, which Governor McDonnell signed into law that year. Former Delegate Greason said at the time that this law was intended to “... reduce the number of SOLs; improve the tests to encourage a sharper focus on problem solving, critical thinking, and knowledge application skills; increase flexibility for local school leaders who want to administer their own local assessments; and create a process to further evaluate and improve the SOLs.”

In 2015, the Virginia Standards of Learning Innovation Committee, including bipartisan membership, education leaders, and community stakeholders appointed by Governor McAuliffe, recommended to the Virginia General Assembly that the Board of Education develop a new Profile of a Virginia Graduate and adjust the state’s diploma requirements to conform with the pursuant Profile. The 2016 General Assembly subsequently approved House Bill 895 and Senate Bill 336 in furtherance of this goal.

In 2018, the Virginia Board of Education released its new Profile of a Virginia Graduate. The Profile emphasized the ‘5 Cs’ of critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, communication, and citizenship. The Board of Education also emphasized the development of core skill sets in the early years of high school and established multiple paths toward college and career readiness for students to follow in the later years of high school, including opportunities for internships, externships, and workforce credentialing.

The intent of the Profile of a Virginia Graduate is to transform learning, teaching, and schooling across the Commonwealth. As Lisa Roday-- President and CEO of Firelce Solutions and Virginia Learns Board member, a key foundational support for the Virginia is for Learners Innovation Network (VaLIN)-- noted, “Education fuels personal growth, fosters curiosity, and is foundational to a child’s ability to thrive and strive. Access to quality teaching should be available to every child in the Commonwealth.” This does not happen by chance.

While the Profile of a Virginia Graduate was designed by the Virginia Board of Education to provide local school communities with a framework to inform learning as students master the Virginia Standards of Learning and work through division curricula, the Profile did not provide a roadmap for how school divisions should strategically identify, develop, revise, and align local efforts necessary for implementation of the Profile framework. School administrators and classroom educators quickly realized that the new Profile would demand innovative approaches to learning that would impact current school division policies, funding, teaching practices, use of time and school schedules, infrastructure needs, professional learning structures, communication

with parents and communities, and numerous other aspects of schooling. The Virginia Department of Education also stressed that the shift to the new Profile framework was not just a high school initiative but rather should impact all PK-12 grade levels.

After multiple conversations and a convening with the Virginia Department of Education and Jobs for the Future staff, a collective of Virginia organizations mobilized together to initiate the *Virginia is for Learners Innovation Network (VaLIN)*, a statewide initiative intended to bring together school division design teams and foster innovation across the Commonwealth. The objective was to create a network of educators who would work together to find solutions to common challenges and share resources relevant to implementation of the Profile.

The Network was formed through funding and in-kind support. The following partners have provided Network support to one or more VaLIN cohorts.

- **Edu21C Foundation**, a national nonprofit supporting organizations whose initiatives impact K-12 learning through commitments to help schools provide great life paths to children
- **Jobs for the Future/Hewlett Foundation**, a national nonprofit focused on broadening educational and economic opportunity who serves as a Hewlett Foundation grant recipient in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education
- **Virginia School Consortium for Learning (VaSCL)**, an educational consortium of over 79 Virginia school divisions that promotes collaboration and high-quality professional learning in order to improve classroom instruction and school leadership practices
- **James Madison University**, the fiscal agent for the Virginia is for Learners Innovation Network
- **Virginia Department of Education**, the administrative agency for public school education in Virginia
- **University of Richmond New American History Project**
- **Commonwealth Learning Partnership**, an organizational umbrella of educators, higher education, and state and national nonprofit associations
- **Virginia Learns**, a foundation to support funding for educational innovation

Together, these entities united around the overarching purpose of fostering changes in Virginia school divisions that result in rigorous, challenging learning opportunities available to all learners regardless of geographic location or demographic. These changes are by design transformational of the school experience for all Virginia children, closing educational and workforce divides and cultivating 'future ready' students, schools, and communities across the Commonwealth.

II. Lead Innovation Teams

All divisions across the Commonwealth were invited to submit an application between June 10-29, 2021. Interested teams were to apply independently or as a collaborative multi-division team. In addition to the financial support from the Virginia Department of Education and The Dintersmith Foundation, each participating division team was also assessed a fee of \$2500 to offset a fraction of expenses and to nurture Network sustainability.

Applicants to Cohort 3.0 were asked to collectively commit to the following:

- Engage in thoughtful innovation as pioneers for the Commonwealth;
- Model openness to growth within their own team and throughout the cohort;
- Prioritize attending the onsite meetings on October 7-8, 2021, March 9, 2022 and June 22 in Chesterfield;
- Engage purposefully with the VALIN coach, communicating in a timely manner;
- Participate in periodic meetings with the VALIN steering committee to share feedback that enhances the membership experience; and
- Design, apply, iterate and share high-quality artifacts generated during our participation in Cohort 3.0.

Each applicant school division responded to four prompts intended to assess their readiness for participation in the cohort:

1. *Your community has assembled this incredible team. What do these people aspire to achieve?*
2. *What problem or opportunity do you seek to address? Why does this particular problem or opportunity require your division's undivided attention?*
3. *What achievable actions might your team take to tangibly address this problem or opportunity between now and June, 2022? How will you know you've succeeded?*
4. *Which of the following Innovation Playlist pathways most closely align with your team's achievable actions?*
 - a. *Mobilizing community to work collaboratively toward a shared goal.*
 - b. *Expanding access to equitable learning experiences and increased student agency.*
 - c. *Unlocking real-world challenges that uplift the 5 C's.*
 - d. *Designing and scoring authentic assessments that purposefully capture higher-order thinking.*
 - e. *Nurturing a culture of caring and connectedness to bolster social-emotional competencies.*

5. *Elaborate on 2-3 areas where your team will need attentive coaching support throughout the 2021-22 academic year.*
6. *What critical information or context about your team is important for the VALIN 3.0 cohort to understand so that we can best support your success?*

In all, 25 school divisions were selected for Cohort 3.0 (see Table 1), representing a broad cross-section of Virginia school systems that came from seven of the eight Superintendent's Regions of the Commonwealth. School divisions of all sizes were represented in Cohort 3.0, ranging from small school systems (0 to 2,000 students) to very large school systems (more than 50,000 students). The average school division percentage of free- and/or reduced-price lunch students in Cohort 3.0 was 48%, with a range of 20% to 93%.

These 25 school divisions engaged in Cohort 3.0 via their Lead Innovation Teams, a strategically identified selection of 6 team members to represent the division's efforts. Team members consisted of superintendents and central office administrators, principals, instructional coaches, classroom teachers, parents, higher education faculty, and other school community members.

Table 1. VaLIN Cohort 3.0 Participants

Region	School Division	Enrollment	FRL%	Locale
1. Central Virginia	Chesterfield County	50k+	38	suburb, large
1. Central Virginia	Henrico County	50k+	45	suburb, large
1. Central Virginia	Hopewell City	2k-5k	93	suburb, large
1. Central Virginia	New Kent County	2k-5k	24	rural, distant
1. Central Virginia	Powhatan County	2k-5k	20	rural, distant
1. Central Virginia	Surry County	0-2k	64	rural, distant
2. Tidewater	Chesapeake City	35k-50k	40	suburb, large
2. Tidewater	Isle of Wight County	5k-10k	35	rural, fringe
2. Tidewater	Newport News City	20k-35k	67	city, middle
2. Tidewater	Suffolk City	10k-20k	50	rural, fringe
2. Tidewater	Virginia Beach City	50k+	39	city, large
3. Northern Neck	Fredericksburg City	2k-5k	66	suburb, small
3. Northern Neck	Stafford County	20k-35k	33	suburb, large
4. Northern Virginia	Fairfax County	50k+	31	suburb, large
4. Northern Virginia	Manassas Park City	2k-5k	62	suburb, large
4. Northern Virginia	Orange County	2k-5k	45	rural, distant
4. Northern Virginia	Winchester City	2k-5k	67	city, small
5. Valley	Amherst County	2k-5k	55	rural, fringe
5. Valley	Fluvanna County	2k-5k	36	rural, distant
5. Valley	Greene County	2k-5k	42	rural, distant
5. Valley	Rockingham County	10k-20k	41	rural, fringe
6. Western Virginia	Roanoke County	10k-20k	30	suburb, midsize
6. Western Virginia	Salem City	2k-5k	38	suburb, midsize
8. Southside	Cumberland County	2k-5k	49	rural, remote
8. Southside	Prince Edward County	2k-5k	86	town, remote

III. Network Model

As in previous cohorts, Lead Innovation Teams were expected to identify (and begin to operationalize) local actions related to deeper learning, expanded equity, and increased learner engagement strategies foundational to the Commonwealth's Profile of a Virginia Graduate outcomes. Although the implementation team helps facilitate the network's activities, the VaLIN work is necessarily collaborative and driven by local school division needs.

Foundational Engagement Strategy

- **Pre-Planning** - Members of the Commonwealth Learning Partnership, VaSCL, and ALP facilitation team (including pertinent experts) assemble to develop / refine the project plan, resources and logistics for each cohort.
- **Kick-Off Regional, Local, and Virtual Seminars** - Regional cohorts convene for one (1) "cohort launch" visioning event. In alliance with their assigned coach, members of the cohort then participate in one of three District-based planning sessions as well as up to three virtual seminars.
- **Mid-Point Regional, Local, and Virtual Seminars** - Cohorts convene for one full-day collaborative design and networking event. Additionally, they participate in one of three District-based planning sessions as well as up to three virtual seminars.
- **Culminating Regional, Local, and Virtual Seminars** - Cohorts convene for one final full-day planning event in their regional hubs. Additionally, they participate in one of three District-based planning sessions as well as up to three virtual seminars.

2022-2023 Implementation Timeline

Phase 1 Understanding the Challenge Aug - Oct 2021	Phase 2 Designing Solutions Oct - Dec 2021	Phase 3 Taking Action and Aligning Efforts Jan - Mar 2022	Phase 4 Amplifying Successes Apr - Jun 2022
Teams identified opportunities to leverage learning from peak pandemic emergency response learning in order to promote deeper learning, active engagement, and equity within their communities.	Teams expanded plans to advance 'small steps to big change' that bring the Profile to life in their districts. Virtual pathways aligned to shared areas of focus united members of Cohort 3.0 in collaborative learning.	Teams implemented, tested, and refined innovation designs in their district. Members engaged in cycles of action and reflection within cross-district 'sandbox' teams that encouraged ongoing iteration and alignment of practice.	Teams applied lessons learned from their design solutions into scale-up plans that expanded the impact of their innovations. Efforts culminated in actionable and contextualized paths to activate the Profile.

Phase 1: Understanding the Challenge (August - October 2021)

Engagement as a member of a VaLIN Cohort unofficially begins with the completion of their team's application. Identified team leads completed the application as referenced above in the description of Lead Innovation Teams, framing their problem of practice that would drive their engagement as a member of the cohort.

This identified problem of practice resulted in alignments of division teams with others in similar focus areas. Through coaching partnerships initiated in August-September 2021, teams began to refine their problem of practice based on identified readiness indicators framed in the VaLIN Innovation Framework. Reference Table 2 on the following page for the list of divisions organized around their respective Change Catalysts as defined via the *What School Could Be* Innovation Playlist.

On October 7, 2021, participating educators convened to officially begin their journey as a cohort via the [VaLIN 3.0 Cohort Launch](#). During this full-day virtual experience, participants were able to confirm concept attainment around urgency and technical aspects of VALIN 3.0; clarify goals, current state awareness, and metrics for success; meet and develop an initial working relationship with other teams in similar pathways, and; work with their coaches to design and confirm roles to realize an actionable implementation plan.

Note: This virtual launch experience had initially been designed to be offered in person in Chesterfield, Virginia. However, response to the continuing spread of novel coronavirus resulted in the need to adjust approaches in an effort to ensure participant safety and well-being. As in Cohort 2, the echoes of the impact of emergency response measures permeate throughout each and every team's engagement as a member of VaLIN Cohort 3.0, with the pandemic response continuing its role as a catalyst for change in its own right.

Table 2. Alignment to Change Catalysts informed by *What School Could Be* Innovation Playlist

Change Catalysts	Division Team Alignments
<u>Mobilize Your Community</u> Working collaboratively to define and / or activate a shared vision for realizing the Profile of a Graduate within our school system.	• Henrico County Public Schools • Powhatan County Public Schools • Prince Edward County Public Schools • Stafford County Schools • Virginia Beach City Public Schools • Winchester City Schools
<u>Student-Driven Learning and/or Real-World Challenges</u> Expanding access to equitable learning experiences and increased student agency and/or unlocking real-world challenges that uplift the 5 C's.	• Amherst County Public Schools • Newport News Public Schools • Suffolk Public Schools • Surry County Public Schools
	• Cumberland County Public Schools • Fluvanna County Public Schools • Hopewell City Public Schools • Rockingham County Public Schools
<u>Authentic Assessments</u> Designing and scoring authentic assessments that purposefully capture higher-order thinking.	• Fairfax County Public Schools • Greene County Schools • Orange County Public Schools • Roanoke County Public Schools • Salem City Schools
<u>Caring and Connected Communities</u> Nurturing a culture of caring and connectedness to bolster social-emotional competencies.	• Chesapeake Public Schools • Chesterfield County Public Schools • Fredericksburg City Public Schools • Isle of Wight County Schools • Manassas Park City Schools • New Kent County Public Schools

Phase 2: Designing Solutions (October - December 2022)

Throughout the fall, division teams partnered with their **ALP Innovation Coaches** for support with their most urgent needs, a partnership that would extend throughout the year. Approximately monthly coaching sessions with each team helped to serve as an accountability mechanism of sorts, ensuring that each team was able to protect the bandwidth to maintain their efforts.

To supplement this coaching partnership, **ALP innovation coaches also offered an array of content-focused webinar series throughout the winter and into the spring.** Topics ranged from explorations of innovative approaches to instruction, processes for systematic development and implementation of performance tasks, strategies for engaging and mobilizing community in all its forms, and recommendations for nurturing a culture of learning, among others. While the

experiences were designed specifically for teams united under a shared Change Catalyst, all members of the Cohort were invited to attend these informative sessions.

Throughout the year, the teams also leveraged shared learning spaces within the What School Could Be platform to promote continued networking. The Group within this learning space served as a de facto hub of connection in the windows between synchronous learning events, and would later emerge into a supportive learning space for teams to engage in synchronous virtual and face-to-face learning as well.

Phase 3: Taking Action and Aligning Efforts (January 2022 - March 2022)

Professional learning support initiated in 2021 continued into the 1st half of 2022. Early 2022 found each team on a continuum of phases of implementation of their innovation, essentially categorized into three different states. Teams were either a) on the precipice of implementation, b) in the midst of initial implementation, or c) engaged in one or more iteration cycles of their innovation. As such, teams engaged in personalized division-focused coaching as well as a calendar of networked learning offered across divisions based on their stage of readiness.

Almost two years to the day following the mandated closure of schools across the Commonwealth, VaLIN Cohort 3.0 united in space and time for the [Spring Networking Event](#).

Learning experiences within this cohort-wide full-day session were intended to support alignment and advancement of each team's movement in adherence with the VaLIN Network's mantra: *Small Steps. Big Change. Deeper Learning. Together.* This much-needed opportunity for collective and collaborative learning not only fueled the alignment of teams' efforts toward community-based realization of the Profile of a Graduate, but also deepened the relationship capital necessary for continued interconnectedness during and following the cohort experience.

Phase 4: Amplifying Successes (April 2022 - June 2022)

Throughout the spring, teams channeled their efforts toward realizing their implementation goals and [capturing the story of those innovations](#) in a variety of formats. These stories of innovation around divisions' shared catalysts of change have the potential to serve both future cohorts as well as divisions across the Commonwealth in support of their own local efforts. As of Fall 2022, these products are in the process of being curated along with others from Cohorts 1 and 2 on a VALIN website designed and maintained by the Commonwealth Learning Partnership.

The Cohort 3.0 journey culminated with [a Celebration Event](#) in June 2022. This full-day onsite session in Chesterfield provided the cohort with opportunities to share with and learn from each other during cross-divisional Campfire Sessions, leveraging the power of story to inspire insights and action. These insights and the follow-up action planning sessions empowered and equipped each team to take 'the next small step' to advance local efforts to realize the Profile of a VA Graduate, generating sustainable momentum that could evolve this year's work into its next stages within and beyond the division.

Process Improvements from Cohort 2 into Cohort 3.0

- **Clarified Intended Outcomes** - The design team focused outcomes on district development of story-driven, resource-rich artifacts to be curated into a thematically aligned collection of Innovation Pathways.
- **More Systematic Leveraging of Cohort I and II Work Products** - The implementation team more intentionally utilized the culminating products from previous implementations to serve as an accelerator in helping divisions identify entry points and applicable strategies.
- **Continuation of Pre-Launch Coaching** - Innovation coaches connected with teams throughout August and September 2021 to unpack their district's applications and level-set around expectations for engagement within the Network.
- **Design Using Innovation Framework** - Team-based design was anchored and further codified by a research-based Innovation Framework authored by the implementation team and informed by Cohort I division teams.
- **Strategic Virtual Engagements** - The virtual shifts spurred on by emergency response learning during Cohort 2 led to intentional application of hybrid learning models within Cohort 3.0, both out of necessity as well as in good stewardship of time and resources.
- **Deepening of Leadership Involvement** - VaLIN Steering Committee members increased the direct support of district leadership and the team's appointed lead to ensure consistent communication and engagement.

Anticipated Improvements for Cohort 4.0

The three-year VaLIN journey from 2019 to the present represents an arc of supporting educators in local innovation that ultimately advances more global realization of the Profile of a Virginia Graduate and the aligned 5 Cs. VaLIN's personalized coaching model has introduced and continues to reinforce progressive, aligned professional learning outcomes, and shows promise for application in a number of contexts.

In consideration of VaLIN Cohort 4.0, the Steering Committee has elected to supplement the networked coaching model with a number of systematic and anticipated process improvements that will translate into expanded depth of impact in years to come.

- **A Shift from Learning to Leading** - Starting with Cohort 4.0, VaLIN will shift the definition of its acronym from *Virginia is for Learners Innovation Network* to *Virginia Leads Innovation Network*. The shift is subtle, but represents a significant transition to an identified need to support leadership competencies that set the conditions for innovation to be successful.
- **Standards-Aligned Coaching Support** - Participants in Cohort 4.0 will unpack and apply specific National Educational Leadership Preparation Standards NELP to solve local problems of practice by identifying innovations that amplify organizational strengths and diminish achievement barriers. This focus on standards-aligned development alongside

project-oriented design will integrate into and enhance the existing VaLIN structure in a number of ways:

- **Self-assessed individual growth** by participants on NELP standard indicators;
- **A portfolio of artifacts** that demonstrate evidence of how NELP standards have been applied to local problems of practice, and;
- **Longitudinal tracking** of participants' intentions to pursue career pathways as educational leaders that may lead in the short- or long-term to the superintendency.
- **Invitation of Individual Participants to Join the Cohort** - As compared to years past in which VaLIN was explicitly a team-based engagement, any Virginia school division team or individual may complete an application to participate in VaLIN 4.0 for 2022-23. This shift reflects the understanding that VaLIN 4.0 will focus on building the leadership capacity of all committed participants.

Applying the lessons learned from the arc of Cohorts 1-3 into this new era of leadership-focused professional development represents a significant maturity of the network, and we look forward to reviewing those efforts upon completion of that cohort in June 2023.

IV. Outcomes and Impact

As referenced in previous summary reports, assessing the success of a program like VALIN in a quantifiable way will always be a challenge. By design, it will likely take several years to identify and understand the long-term impacts on students and communities of this school redesign and innovation work. Additionally, the target competencies of the new Profile of a Virginia Graduate - the '5 Cs' of critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship - are not as easily measured as more traditional student learning outcomes of rote factual recall and procedural regurgitation. Divergent thinking and interpersonal skills are not easily reduced to fixed-response assessments.

That said, in terms of investment in and realization of new processes and structures both at a local and statewide level, VALIN continues to serve as a powerful avenue for achieving the Virginia General Assembly's student diploma requirements. Success measures below provide an overview of participant feedback on their experiences as members of the cohort as well as work products resulting from each participating team's efforts.

Ongoing Participant Feedback Around Professional Learning

Charts 1-3 below show participant feedback before and after professional learning sessions offered throughout the calendar year.

Chart 1. Perceptions of VALIN Participants Before/After Sessions (average scores)

VALIN Cohort 3.0 Participant Feedback

[n=27 participants]

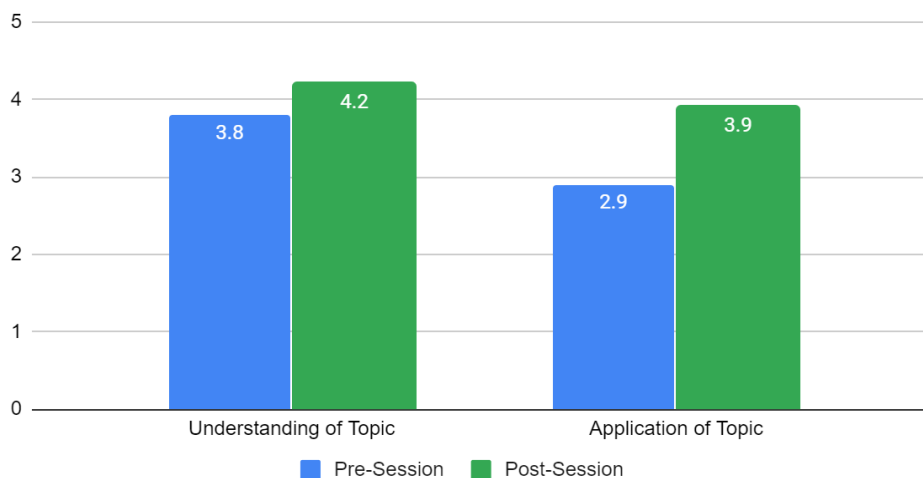


Chart 2. VaLIN Participants' Perceived Understanding Before / After Sessions

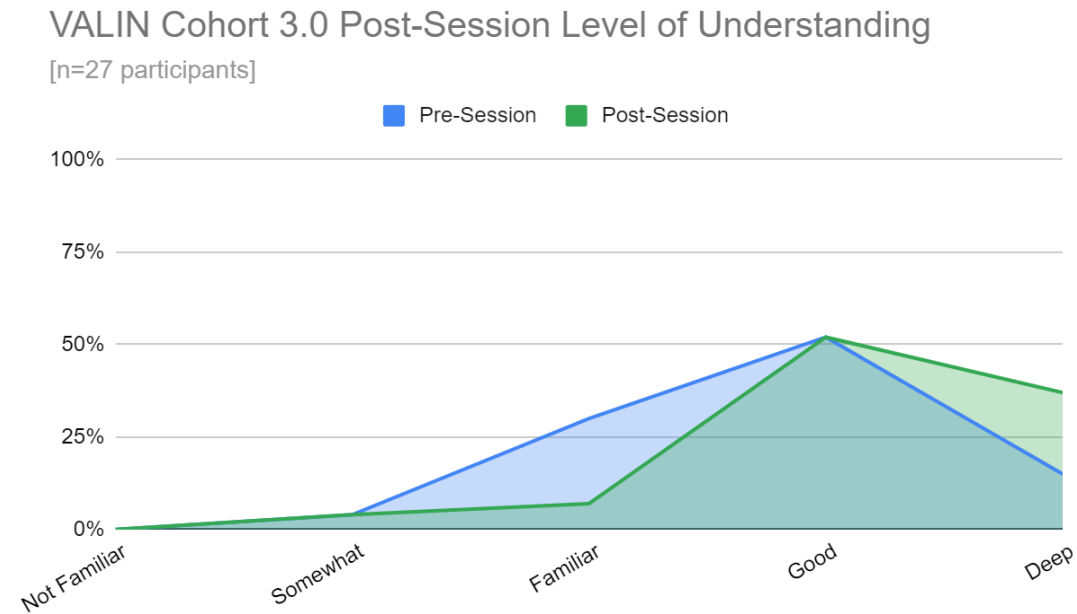
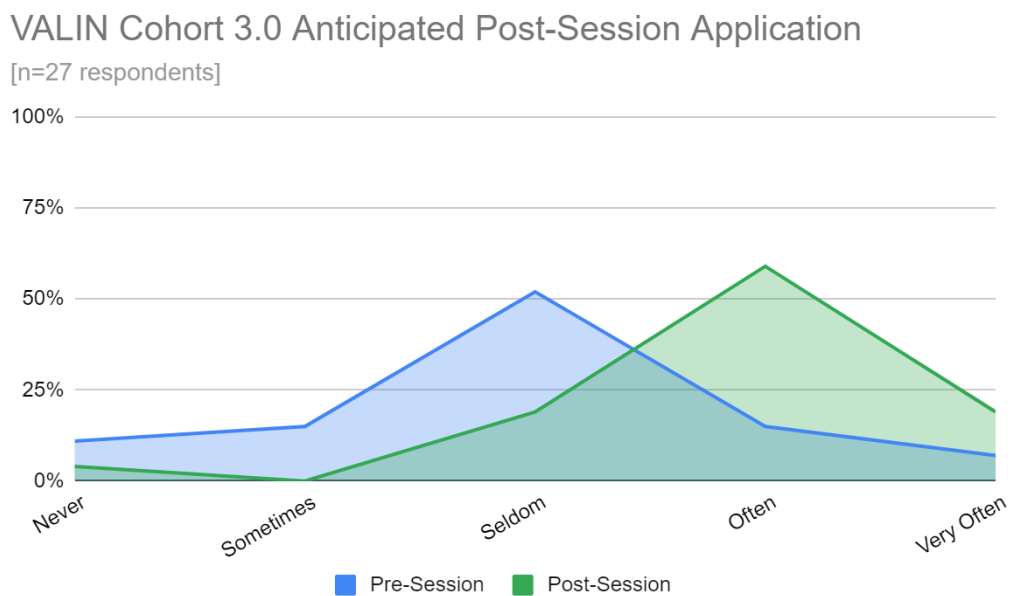


Chart 3. VaLIN Participants' Anticipated Application Before / After Sessions



Participant Feedback on Impactful Session Characteristics and Facilitator Actions

- *The combination of our team leader describing the ‘why’ and the vision paired with our coach’s support activities allowed me to feel empowered to begin the work that our team had set forth.*
- *What was most helpful to me were the consistent connections made between what was shared by participants in the group and the overall design process.*
- *We attended webinars about how to effectively break down standards and build performance assessments. These sessions deepened our understanding of the process so we could better teachers in their understanding.*
- *Affirmation and resource ideas. I appreciated what our facilitator said about how sometimes the POLICY from higher up is interpreted into a procedure further down that doesn't actually align with the intention of the policy at all. This is actually so relevant to our work in district level administration and something that leads to substantial frustration for those of us who frequently feel compelled to go rogue.*
- *I think that the examples and rationale that was provided affirmed a lot of the work I am trying to sustain here in my division. Curiosity and building the capacity to ask questions will ultimately support deeper learning, increase sense of belonging, strengthen metacognition and reflection skills, and increase student agency. I see this as one of the key features that will move the needle toward learning with and for students as opposed to teaching to the test. Curiosity is the cure for apathy. I hope to gather the slides and associated links together and prepare some opportunities for teachers and coaches to explore their own curiosity about curiosity. Thanks so much!*
- *The quality of encouragement plus the call to action were wonderful.*
- *Help with networking and generating ideas and activities supports our growth.*
- *Sharing with other districts and our division work time were the most beneficial to me.*
- *Our instructor helped us to narrow our focus as it comes to goals for outcomes associated with student-driven learning. He also facilitated us brainstorming action items needed to implement this on a district level.*

Participant Perspectives on School / District Benefits from Engagement in VaLIN

- *It has helped us as leaders develop a clearer goal and path so we are able to meet teachers where they are in their understanding and move them forward in their thinking.*
- *Our plan to roll out a uniform PBL practice in our schools that is interdisciplinary will appeal to more students for engagement.*
- *Better understanding of our learning model supports the daily work of our schools in ensuring that our steps towards continuous school improvement are aligned.*
- *This effort will result in a cohesive plan to further implement POG.*
- *The time to collectively collaborate will improve education.*

- *Implementing authentic assessments district-wide will allow us to improve our core instruction and provide our students with deeper learning experiences.*
- *As a result of working as a VaLIN team, we will develop an overall instruction and assessment plan that is designed to systematically integrate transdisciplinary and disciplinary skills to ensure all students are exposed and assessed in these skills.*
- *The professional learning program provided strategies for training teachers, as well the Division's instructional staff, in the effective development of performance assessments. We still have ways to go in training our teachers. Any professional opportunity ideas would be appreciated.*
- *We have had some teachers who have struggled to understand the concept of performance assessment, and I really liked the way our coach unpacked the standard as part of the process. I think it would help clear up some of the confusion for teachers.*
- *This learning program will provide an avenue for moving forward. I am hoping this work will guide our professional learning and strategic plan in the coming year.*
- *Success in our project will result in increasing the critical thinking skills of students while engaging them in relevant problems to solve.*

VaLIN Innovation Team Project Artifacts

All told, 23 of the 25 school divisions that joined VALIN Cohort 3.0 in August 2021 completed a full year of project development and implementation actions through June 2022. One school division electing not to continue participation in the cohort cited a preference for more of an onsite delivery model versus the virtual delivery model that started the year, while the other experienced competing priorities that were unanticipated when their application was initially submitted and accepted.

The following collection of artifacts offers a brief overview of each team's focus for their innovation projects, organized around the Edu21C Innovation Playlist Change Catalyst most aligned to each division team's efforts. Associated hyperlinks provide access to case studies, presentations, videos, podcasts, and other mixed media artifacts that offer additional depth of context around the team's project.

Change Catalyst 1: Mobilize The Learning Community via Shared Vision

Cumberland County - [Design and Use of PK-12 5Cs Rubrics](#)

Cumberland County has been working on developing and aligning the 5C's rubrics PK-12. As the team continued on their journey, they defined division core competencies for each C and worked on how to support teaching to incorporate them in learning experiences. The team's long term goal is to provide feedback to students at all levels on the 5C's that foster growth as individuals and prepare them for their future.

Henrico County - [Mobilizing Our Community to Accelerate LifeReady Learning](#)

The HCPS team focused on mobilizing their community “from the inside out,” leveraging available accelerators to advance efforts with instructional leaders, school leaders and staff, and the broader community in aligning curriculum, refining implementation of the division instructional model, and increasing the depth and scope of alternative assessment models.

Powhatan County - [Aligning Vision and Values to Support The Portrait of a Graduate](#)

Powhatan’s DL421 initiative has driven division efforts toward deeper learning for the past several years. To advance this initiative’s efforts, the Cohort 3.0 team infused the division’s vision and values with more depth, identifying gaps in the implementation and addressing needs by creating the Integrity Matrix by grade level.

Stafford County - [Building a Strategic Plan with Robust Stakeholder Involvement](#)

Over the course of participation in VaLIN 2.0, the Stafford team focused on beginning to outline what the SCPS-specific profile of a graduate / learner / educator would look like. Their efforts as members of Cohort 3.0 centered around creating an engagement strategy to bring all stakeholders to a shared understanding of the Stafford CSW Profile of a Graduate.

Suffolk City - [Systematic & Effective Implementation of Instructional Initiatives](#)

The Suffolk team strove to promote coherence within their instructional initiatives, defining a systems approach rooted in continuous improvement models in order to close achievement gaps, build and sustain capacity, and meet the needs of all students. Their team was able to pilot this systematic approach with a multi-stakeholder focus on Tier 1 instruction, and look forward to using the process to address newly emerging needs in the years to come.

Change Catalysts 2 & 3: Student Driven Learning / Real World Challenges**Prince Edward County - [A Return to Joyful Learning](#)**

Prince Edward County Public Schools focused on helping teachers and students return to joyful learning. Learning from focus groups, designing a new professional development plan, and curating engaging resources for their schools served as the primary guides for the team’s work during the year.

Rockingham County - [Inquiry-Based Curriculum Design](#)

Social Studies teachers in Rockingham County Public Schools spent the last year working with Dr. Kathy Swan of the University of Kentucky and Dr. Emma Thacker of James Madison University in order to develop inquiry-based curricula based upon the principles and structure of the Inquiry Design Model (IDM). This directly correlated with our work in VaLIN 3.0 in working with our coach, Dr. Madeline Black. The video linked here features a special inquiry in 4th grade Virginia Studies where students wrote to Virginia civil rights pioneers.

Surry County - [Data-Driven Professional Learning Supports to Advance Innovation](#)

Participation in VaLIN's Cohort 3 has fostered the need for Surry County Public Schools (SCPS) to explore multiple long-range advantages of employing innovative strategic plans that employ Big Hairy Audacious Goals (BHAGs). The method includes examining multiple organizational theories that originated in the business community and subsequently adapted to educational settings. Acknowledging the need to address historical inequities can serve as a driving force for change as it is imperative that school districts, like SCPS, begin to plan or lay out long term strategies to propel them to a higher level of success and status.

Change Catalyst 4: Authentic Assessments**Amherst County - [Balanced Assessment on the Road to Innovation](#)**

Building on the efforts that Amherst's VaLIN 2.0 team advanced within instructional models that support deeper learning, this year's efforts provided an opportunity to focus on infusing performance task administration as a means of balancing their assessment approach.

Fairfax County - [Presentations of Learning](#)

Fairfax County Public Schools has focused on assessment innovation through exploring how performance assessment and presentations of learning centered on growth within the competencies of our graduate profile -- termed POG POL -- can support a more balanced assessment approach for the division.

Greene County - [Developing and Implementing Performance Assessments](#)

Greene County Public Schools continued their efforts to support Innovation Teams within the division toward the development and implementation of performance assessments. Their multi-phase process included defining a shared approach to balanced assessment, creating and implementing in select grade levels, and engaging in grade level / department scoring events.

Orange County - [Performance-Based Assessment](#)

Orange County Public Schools focused on Performance-Based Assessments as a VaLIN Cohort 3.0 Team. In particular, the team addressed Performance Assessment design, score calibration, and communication. On their website, they share artifacts including a presentation, podcast, and a few of the resources used in the project.

Roanoke County - [Balanced Assessment System via 'Opportunity Ready' Certification](#)

The Roanoke County team continued advancement of the division's C-Change Initiative by engaging in a process of developing and piloting the implementation of student-led conferences and portfolios that relate to the Roanoke County Profile of a Graduate.

Salem City - [Integration of Performance Assessment into Curriculum](#)

Salem City has made progress on teachers administering performance tasks but sought to scale it up division-wide. To address this challenge, their team led review of existing tasks, revision of any that needed adjustment, engagement in a gap analysis to identify areas where tasks were missing, and development of a K-12 map identifying tasks and a curriculum map that shows growth in the 5Cs across K-12. The link above shares a video of students piloting a new performance task in 5th grade.

Virginia Beach City - [Division-Wide Approach to Balanced Assessment](#)

To ensure Virginia Beach students are future-ready as outlined in the division's Graduate Profile, this VALIN team identified a core focus: balanced assessment. To address this focus area, the team captured and communicated a brief history of balanced assessment in VBCPS, designed a curriculum audit tool to review performance assessment opportunities, developed consistent framework and expectations for VBCPS curated works of substance, and captured artifacts from exemplary implementation to inform broader adoption.

Change Catalyst 5: Caring and Connected Communities**Chesapeake City - CARES ([overview](#) and [deck](#)) and Empower Collabs ([overview](#) and [deck](#))**

As a means of advancing outcomes associated with Chesapeake Compassionate and Responsive Educational Supports (CARES), the Chesapeake City Cohort 3.0 team helped to shepherd and support the launch of Empower Collabs. Within these communities of practice, division educators collaboratively engage in professional learning, address problems of practice, and share innovative strategies and resources to empower student-centered learning at scale.

Fredericksburg City - [Student and Staff Well-Being](#)

Fredericksburg City Public Schools joined VaLIN cohort 3.0 with a focus on rebranding division efforts as a means of improving trust between schools and the community. The team's artifacts include the research used to frame overall revision to their approach alongside communication materials to engage their school community.

Isle of Wight - [Making It Better for Students, One Relationship at a Time](#)

The Isle of Wight Cohort 3.0 team's goal was to explore the relationship needs of students and staff and to develop and pilot strategies that build relationships for students and staff, simultaneously.

Manassas Park City - [Individual Excellence Framework](#)

As a member of this year's cohort, the MPCS team elected to review the common language innovation framework from cohort 1.0, centering on how this year's team could revise the initial Inclusive Excellence to reflect Individual Excellence. It is from this that Cohort 3.0 created the Individual Excellence Framework, offering a continuum that focuses on self-reflection and high expectations for all.