

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

MINUTES

November 17, 2004

The Board of Education and the Board of Career and Technical Education met in Conference Rooms C and D at the James Monroe State Office Building, Richmond, Virginia, with the following members present:

Mr. Thomas M. Jackson, Jr., President	Dr. Gary L. Jones
Mrs. Iris M. Castro	Mrs. Eleanor B. Saslaw
Mr. Mark Emblidge	Dr. Ella P. Ward
Mr. M. Scott Goodman	
Mr. David L. Johnson	Dr. Jo Lynne DeMary Superintendent of Public Instruction

Mr. Jackson, president, presided, and called the meeting to order at 9: 15 a.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Jackson asked for a moment of silence and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made to add the following item to the agenda: *First Review of the Amended Fast Track Proposal Regulations Governing General Education Development Certificates*. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Saslaw made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2004, meeting of the Board. Dr. Jones seconded the motion that carried unanimously. Copies of the minutes had been distributed to all members of the Board of Education.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one spoke during public comment.

ACTION/DISCUSSION ON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULATIONS

Final Review of Proposed Revisions to the Regulations Governing Scoliosis Screening Programs (8 VAC 20-690-10 et seq.)

Mrs. Gwen Smith, school health specialist, presented this item. Mrs. Smith said that the scoliosis regulations are required as a result of HB 1834, enacted by the 2003 General Assembly and codified in § 22.1-273.1 of the Code of Virginia.

Mrs. Smith said that the purpose of the regulations is to require school divisions to do one of the following:

1. Provide information on scoliosis to parents of students in grades five through 10, including a definition of scoliosis, or
2. Implement a scoliosis screening program for students in grades five through 10, or
3. Implement a scoliosis-screening program for students in selected grades five through 10 and provide information on scoliosis to parents of students in grades five through 10 not selected for screening.

School boards implementing a scoliosis program of regular screening shall provide training for personnel who may conduct the screening. Qualified licensed medical practitioners shall conduct training of school personnel. Practitioners may use various training methods including, but not limited to, in-person training, video instruction, or review of a training manual. The Department of Education will provide training methods and educational materials that school divisions could adopt.

Dr. Jones made a motion to approve the Regulations Governing Scoliosis Screening Programs. Mr. Emblidge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

First Review of a Proposal Regarding Establishing Standards of Learning Testing Windows

Mrs. Shelley Loving-Ryder presented this item. Mrs. Loving-Ryder said that in the early years of the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment program, the Virginia Department of Education set a testing window for each school division based on the last day of school in that division.

In November 2000, the Board of Education adopted a resolution allowing school divisions to administer the SOL tests as late as the last day of school. This policy was adopted in response to school divisions' requests for increased instructional time before the administration of the tests.

However, the current policy increases the exposure of test forms, interferes with the ability of the testing contractor to deliver materials on time and to complete the statistical work necessary to report scores, and makes it difficult for Department staff to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) by the deadlines required by the No Child Left Behind Act as well as to calculate accreditation ratings in a timely fashion.

Mr. Emblidge made a motion to accept for first review the policy establishing three testing windows for the spring administration for the Standards of Learning tests in grades 3-8 beginning with the 2005-2006 school year. The policy would require that school divisions choose one of three established testing windows for the administration of the SOL tests in grades 3-8. School divisions would continue to have the flexibility to set their own testing windows for the end-of-course tests. Dr. Ward seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Final Review of an Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) Recommendations Supporting a Proposed Cut-Score for the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA)

Dr. Thomas Elliott, assistant superintendent for teacher education and licensure, presented this item. Dr. Elliott said that in June 1999, Educational Testing Service conducted, in cooperation with and on behalf of the Virginia Department of Education, Standard Setting and Content Validation Studies for the *School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA)*.

The goals of the study were to provide additional evidence regarding the content validity of the assessment and to determine a range of recommended passing scores for the *SLLA*. In addition to providing the passing score recommendations, two panels of experts—separate panels representing principals and central office administrators—also were asked to render a series of judgments attesting to the appropriateness of the *SLLA* for use in Virginia. The results supported the use of the assessment for the licensure of beginning school principals and for central office administrators in Virginia.

In Virginia, an individual may become eligible for an endorsement in administration and supervision preK-12 by completing requirements of the *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel, Effective 1998*. As part of those requirements, an individual must complete either the *SLLA* or a full-time internship as a school principal, assistant principal, or central office staff, or one year of successful, full-time experience on the job.

Cost associated with the administration of the *School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA)* will be incurred by Educational Testing Services. Prospective principals and assistant principals will be required to pay the registration and test fees of approximately \$485.

Mrs. Saslaw made a motion to approve ABTEL's recommended cut-score of 165 for the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) to be effective July 1, 2005, for principals and assistant principals. Dr. Ward seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Final Review of Proposed Revisions to the Standards of Quality

Mrs. Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent, policy and communication, presented this item. Mrs. Wescott reviewed with the Board changes previously made to the Standards of Quality at the committee meeting:

- ♦ Page 6, lines 5 and 6, add language about students reaching their full potential, as recommended by Mr. Goodman;
- ♦ Page 14, lines 1 and 4, add the term "full-time equivalent" as recommended by staff in response to a comment from the public;
- ♦ Page 18, lines 22-23, replace language to read as follows: Each local school division shall require the use of relevant data to evaluate student progress and to determine educational performance.
- ♦ Page 23, line 1, change the title of the standard to "Quality of classroom instruction and educational leadership" as recommended by Dr. Jones;
- ♦ Page 23, line 6, delete entire paragraph; Dr. Jones made a substitute motion to include the following language: Consistent with the findings that leadership is essential for the advancement of public education in the Commonwealth, teacher, administrator, and superintendent evaluations shall be based on student academic progress and skills and knowledge of instructional personnel.
- ♦ Page 23, lines 13-23, replace language about performance evaluations with language recommended by Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals and add references to evaluations of administrators and superintendents, consistent with the uniform guidelines; and
- ♦ Page 25, lines 24 and 25, add language about the analysis of the data and how it will be utilized to improve classroom instruction and student achievement, as recommended by Dr. Jones.

Dr. Jones made a motion to approve the revisions to the Standards of Quality. Mr. Emblidge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Jackson thanked Mrs. Wescott and staff for their work on revising the Standards of Quality document. Mr. Jackson also complimented Dr. Jones and said that some of the best work done by the Board has been under Dr. Jones' leadership during the revision of the Standards of Quality.

Final Review of the Board of Education's 2004 Annual Report on the Condition and Needs of the Public Schools in Virginia

Mrs. Wescott also presented this item. Mrs. Wescott presented the final draft of the report. Mrs. Wescott said that the only addition to the report would be information about graduation success as suggested by Dr. Jones.

Dr. Ward made a motion to approve the final report and authorize the Department of Education staff to transmit the report to the Governor and General Assembly as required by 22.1-18 of the Code of Virginia. Mr. Emblidge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Jackson said that this was the best report produced in some time and the information included in the report was phenomenal. Mrs. Wescott said that Dr. Margaret Roberts, executive assistant to the Board of Education, wrote the report. The audience applauded Dr. Roberts.

Final Review of Pupil Transportation Specifications for School Buses

Mr. Dan Timberlake, assistant superintendent for finance, presented this item. Mr. Timberlake said that the Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation was approved in January 2004. The approved regulations deleted the section on specifications for school buses, and made the specifications a separate document. This permits the Department of Education to revise and update the bus specifications more frequently than would be permitted under the process for revising regulations.

Mr. Timberlake said that the specifications have been updated and revised to include recent changes in equipment and technology. The changes were developed by the department's Specifications Committee, which is comprised of pupil transportation representatives from school divisions across the state. None of the changes represent significant deviations from standard industry practices. All of the specifications presented comply with the safety requirements of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Specifications Committee, composed of representatives of all regions of the state, developed these proposed specifications with the goal of improving safety. Knowing that it is difficult to design statewide specifications that encompass the specific needs of each of our fleets, the Committee considered the geographic differences of our regions, the newer technology available for new school buses, the past track record of current specification configurations, specifically the overall cost of maintenance, and any components with a record of failure that caused safety to be compromised. The committee also made comparisons with specifications written in other states and made some adjustments to Virginia specifications to improve our minimum specifications, and align Virginia specifications with other Southeastern States.

Outlined below are a few of the most visible changes:

1. Conventional Type “C” Buses – Historically, Virginia has allowed Type “C” buses with seating configurations up to 64 passengers. These specifications introduce 71 and 77 passenger configurations.
2. Seating Capacity – Last year, Virginia removed the requirement for the manufacturers to submit annual floor plans and seating plans. To clarify our bus seating capacities, section 60 D of the specifications explains seating configurations for both Type “C” and Type “D” buses. This proposed change requires a corresponding change in the seating capacities used in the Bus Type Specifications.

“Type C school buses” are buses with a body constructed utilizing a chassis with a hood and front fender assembly. The entrance door is behind the front wheels. “Type D school buses” are buses with a body constructed utilizing a stripped chassis, and the entrance door is ahead of the front wheels.

As part of the process for developing these specifications, the department posted the proposed specifications on its Website for 30 days in order to give school divisions and others the opportunity to review them and offer comments. Only one comment was received from a school bus manufacturer, which requested two changes in the specifications that would have made their buses more competitive with other manufacturers. The Specifications Committee did not make any changes based on their comments. No other comments were received.

Dr. Ward made a motion to adopt the proposed school bus specifications. Mr. Emblidge seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Status Report on the PASS Program

Dr. James Heywood, executive director for school improvement, presented this item. Dr. Heywood said that on July 11, 2002 Governor Warner launched the PASS (Partnership for Achieving Successful Schools) Initiative that provided technical assistance to all schools accredited with warning for 2002. Of special focus were 32 Title I schools who were under federal sanctions and in “school improvement” status that were designated by the Governor as “PASS Priority Schools.” The beginning of the 2004-05 school year marks the completion of two years of the PASS program which has evolved into new technical assistance models and resulted in the “graduation” of six (19%) PASS schools that are no longer under federal sanctions.

Ten Lessons Learned from Two Years in Pass:

- ♦ Do not let school Management problems distract from instructional leadership;
- ♦ Instructional quality is difficult to achieve;

- ♦ Effective principals must problem-solve on the fly;
- ♦ Data must inform instruction – at the teacher level;
- ♦ There must be a sense of urgency in the school;
- ♦ Don't continue to teach the wrong stuff;
- ♦ The school culture must reflect the three c's: commitment, collaboration and a common vision to high student achievement;
- ♦ Real accountability is necessary;
- ♦ Sustained improvement cannot happen without effective central office leadership and support;
- ♦ Schools cannot be successful without skilled, courageous, committed leadership.

The Board received the status report on the PASS program.

Report on the Development of a Template for a Statewide Articulation Agreement for Career and Technical Education in Compliance with HJR 125

Mr. Robert Almond, director, career and technical education, presented this report. Mr. Almond said that upon the recommendation of the Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education, the 2004 General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution No. 125, which requested the Board of Education, the State Board for Community Colleges, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to develop a template for a statewide articulation agreement for career and technical education.

The Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education is established in Chapter 30 (§ 30-198 et seq.) of Title 30 and among its charges is to facilitate coordination of public school career and technical services, workforce training programs, and efforts among agencies and institutions of the Commonwealth. HJR 125 noted that articulation agreements can provide a seamless pathway for students to progress from high school to community college for completion of industry certifications and state licensure requirements and, for certain students, to enrollment in four-year institutions of higher education.

At the request of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) office, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) assumed a leadership role in coordinating a response to HJR 125. Several committees and a taskforce consisting of stakeholders and staff members from the VDOE, VCCS, and SCHEV were convened to identify issues relating to credentialing of teachers and how credits in career and technical education courses can be transferred from one high school to another, from any high school to any community college, and from any community college to the public four-year institutions of higher education.

The taskforce drafted a statewide articulation template that provides for flexibility for school divisions, community colleges, and four-year institutions of higher education,

taking into account the various curricula that are offered in the many schools, colleges, and universities, and the local economic and other conditions. The draft template:

- Includes some standardization of credit transfers
- Provides options for customization to allow various stakeholders to match the interests of programs and localities
- Offers opportunities for improvement in cooperation and collaboration between and among the various levels of education
- Provides sections that enable collaborators to determine:
 - A list of programs and courses that are articulated
 - The identity of the agencies that are articulated for each program or course
 - The tuition charges for the various classes at the different levels
 - Information on limitations on enrollment in the various programs or classes
 - The effect, if any, on tuition charges of articulation agreements in the community colleges and four-year institutions of higher education

HJR 125 requires the Board of Education, State Board for Community Colleges, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to complete their meetings on this matter and report on the development of a template for a statewide articulation agreement to the Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education by November 30, 2004.

The Board of Education, State Board for Community Colleges, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia also are required to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of findings and recommendations (for publication as a document). The final template and report of findings will be ready in January 2005. The reports will be submitted no later than the first day of the 2005 Regular Session of the General Assembly and will be posted on the General Assembly's Web site.

The Board received the report on the development of a template for a statewide articulation agreement for career and technical education in response to HJR 125.

First Review of the Amended Fast Track Proposed Regulations Governing the General Educational Development Certificates (8 VAC 20-360-10 et seq.)

Mrs. Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent for policy and communications, presented this item. Mrs. Wescott said that the current regulations were last amended September 1, 1980, and are out of date. The Board approved regulations under the Fast Track Process, as provided in the Administrative Process Act, on November 19, 2003.

The proposed amendments to the existing regulations would delete the requirement that individuals must wait for a period of 60 days before retesting. It would allow individuals who do not reside in Virginia to take the test. It would allow individuals who do not reside in Virginia to take the test. It would revise the minimum requirements to achieve a passing score to be consistent with the passing score

requirements set by the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education that became effective January 1, 2002. It also provides for certain high school students who have an individual student alternative education plan (ISAEP) to qualify for a GED certificate, as provided by ' 22.1-254 of the Code of Virginia.

Dr. Jones made a motion to waive first review of the amended Regulations Governing General Educational Development Certificates and authorized staff of the Department of Education proceed with the remaining steps required by the Administrative Process Act. Dr. Ward seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE REGULATIONS GOVERNING ADULT HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The following persons spoke during public comment:

Katherine DeSilva
Bonnie Moore

DISCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES

Mr. Emblidge identified items that will be on the agenda for the Board of Education Committee on Lowest Performing Schools, starting in January.

Mr. Jackson thanked Board members for their terrific work during the year, and department staff for making the Board look good.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business of the Board of Education and Board of Career and Technical Education, Mr. Jackson adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

President

Secretary