

**State Superintendent's Leadership Advisory Council Meeting  
Friday, March 2, 2001.**

Present

Superintendent's group - Stewart D. Roberson, Timothy R. Jenney, Harry Ward, Glenn Burdick (for Edgar B. Hatrick, III), Wayne White (for John H. Kidd), Ira R. Trollinger, Robert C. McCracken, Margaret V. Blackmon, Walter A. McFarlane, superintendent, Department of Correctional Education, Steven R. Staples, Edward L. Kelly, and Alfred R. Butler, IV and Andy Stamp, VASS.

Department of Education – Jo Lynne DeMary, M. Kenneth Magill, Cameron Harris, Anne Wescott, Dan S. Timberlake, Lan Neugent, Charles W. Finley, and Harry L. Smith. Kirk T. Schroder, president of the Board of Education, and Susan L. Genovese, a member of the board, attended part of the meeting.

Dr. DeMary opened the three-hour meeting by referring to the current state budget situation. In response to questions from superintendents, she said direct state aid to public schools would not be affected by the budget impasse. She also reminded the superintendents that school divisions must have a waiver from the Board of Education to begin the school session before Labor Day. She said 61 school divisions now have waivers to open schools before Labor Day. The city of Virginia Beach has requested permission to begin schools prior to Labor Day by adding days to the school calendar. Dr. DeMary pointed out that a school division cannot shift 180-day calendars in an effort to open schools before Labor Day.

In response to a request from Dr. DeMary, superintendents mentioned the following three concerns: the need to keep school construction funds flowing, the timing of the release of the Department of Education school report card, and whether or not SOL test data can be integrated into administrative software used by school divisions. Dr. DeMary asked staff members to look into the last concern.

During the discussion of the current state budget impasse, the hope was expressed by superintendents that the Governor's Best Practice Centers would not be affected by any personnel reductions if they should become necessary. Dr. DeMary stated that her goal is to protect the Best Practice Centers and other positions in the Department of Education to the best of her ability.

Following discussion of the superintendents' issues, the agenda for the meeting included:

### Report Card Update

Cam Harris said the school report cards should be received by all school divisions by March 10. Some concern was expressed about the timing of the release of the report card. Dr. DeMary urged the superintendents to make sure that directors of testing in school divisions are familiar with procedures for administering SOL tests when classes are interrupted by inclement weather.

Dr. Burdick suggested that school divisions could distribute the school report card and save the Department of Education the expense of paying postage to mail the card to parents. His suggestion was endorsed by other superintendents.

### Budget Update

Dan Timberlake informed the superintendents that he had met with the State Auditor of Public Accounts regarding an issue that could have an impact on school divisions' financial reports. School divisions, he noted, will be affected by a new requirement of the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB 34) for reporting debts and real property. The state auditor will be contacting finance directors and probably some superintendents regarding the GASB requirement. He said there would be no impact on the annual school reports.

Mr. Timberlake referred to the fact that the recent session of the General Assembly failed to agree on budget amendments, including any new increase for teachers' salaries. School divisions will continue to receive funding for teachers' salary increases awarded in fiscal year 2001, which were included in the 2000-2002 budget adopted at the 2000 session of the General Assembly. If there is no agreement on the budget amendments, he pointed out, school divisions will be governed by the 2000-2002 budget adopted by the 2000 General Assembly. Mr. Timberlake stated that he hopes to be able to provide guidance to school divisions on the state budget by March 9. Mr. Timberlake also stated that he is working with the Department of Planning and Budget and the Virginia Retirement System to determine the correct retirement rates for fiscal years 2001 and 2002; there is no change in group life rates at this time. He said he is waiting for written confirmation from VRS regarding the rates and he hopes to send information to superintendents by March 9.

## General Assembly Update

Anne Wescott reviewed a list of bills and joint resolutions affecting public education that were adopted by the 2001 session of the General Assembly. Of 175 bills and joint resolutions tracked by the department, she said, some 60-70 were approved and submitted to the Governor for his signature. She said an updated list will be sent to School divisions after the veto session of the legislature. Mrs. Wescott reported that all “multiple criteria” affecting the Standards of Learning were killed. In response to a request, she said she would see if retirement bills are included in information sent to superintendents.

## February 15, 2001 Board of Education Actions

Dr. DeMary informed the superintendents of highlights of the meeting of the Board of Education on February 15, including recognition of Virginia Teachers of the Year. She said that the March agenda for the board had not been completed, but would include extended school year requests from Virginia Beach and two other school divisions. She asked the superintendents to let her know (e-mail) if they have items that the board needs to consider or inform Dr. Magill at their regional meetings.

Dr. DeMary also reported that Governor Gilmore had appointed two new members to the Board of Education. They are Scott Goodman, of Charlottesville, replacing State Senator J. Brandon Bell, and Gary L. Jones, of Clifton, replacing State Senator John W. Russell.

## Technology Update

Lan Neugent provided information about the demonstration sites for the Web-based Standards of Learning Technology Initiative. He reported that work on the sites is under way and completion is expected by the end of March; a site in the Department of Education’s offices in the Monroe Building will be included in the projects.

In response to a question about the e-rate, Mr. Neugent said he was not sure what will be done. He said it will be necessary to wait and see what President Bush has included in his education proposals. He also told the superintendents that technology funds are included in the state budget for 2001-2002.