

Meeting of the Superintendent's Leadership Advisory Council

Friday, May 10, 2002

Present: Superintendent's Group – Dorothea M. Shannon, Timothy R. Jenney, Harry M. Ward, Thomas H. DeBolt, Lowell T. Lemons, Ira R. Trollinger, Margaret V. Blackmon, Robert C. McCracken (via teleconferencing), and Alfred R. Butler, executive director of VASS.

Department of Education – Jo Lynne DeMary, M. Kenneth Magill, Kent Dickey, Anne Wescott, Charles W. Finley, Lan Neugent, and Harry L. Smith.

Virginia High School League – Ken Tilley, executive director.

Dr. DeMary welcomed the superintendents to the meeting, which included the following agenda:

Veto Session Legislative Amendments – Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent for policy and public affairs, reported on the April 17 “veto session” of the 2002 General Assembly. She said most of the amendments proposed by the Governor to bills passed by the legislature were technical in nature. She reported that the Governor had not acted on the “In God We Trust” bill passed by the General Assembly, and she said he has until May 17 to veto or sign the legislation. Updated information on the veto session will be sent to superintendents as quickly as possible.

Dr. DeMary called attention to a provision in the state appropriations act asking the Board of Education and the state superintendent to prepare a plan to consolidate services for deaf and blind students at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind at Staunton and to identify arrangements necessary for transferring services provided at the Virginia School for the Deaf, Blind, and Multi-Disabled at Hampton to other state-operated or private facilities. The plan is to be presented to specified House and Senate committees by December 1, 2002.

Veto Session Budget Amendments – In the absence of Dan Timberlake, Kent Dickey, budget director, referred to Superintendent's Memo No. 82, dated May 3, 2002, and said there are no major changes in the education budget as a result of the veto session of the General Assembly. The superintendents were told that a memorandum will be sent as quickly as possible regarding final state funding to be received for fiscal year 2002.

Dr. Jenney asked if the Department of Education plans to study National Board Certification and its impact on teachers. Dr. DeMary said the National Board has initiated an RFP for a study, which is probably two or three years in the future.

Dr. DeMary told the council that the JVG Foundation is requesting \$325,000 from the Business-Education Partnership to fund the Jobs for Virginia Graduates program. Funding for this program was eliminated by the Virginia General Assembly in the state budget for 2002-2004.

May Board of Education Meeting Agenda – Anne Wescott reviewed items that are expected to be considered by the Board of Education when it meets on May 23. Items tentatively scheduled, she said, include first reviews of requirements for participation of students with disabilities in the Virginia Accountability System, guidelines for awarding differentiated verified credit for career and technical certification and licensure examinations, the Accountability Advisory Committee’s recommended equivalent scores for substitute SOL tests, and guidelines for local school boards to award verified units of credit for Standard Diplomas for students who enter the ninth grade for the first time in the 2001-2002, 2002-2003, and 2003-2004 school years.

Dr. DeMary said the Governor may attend the board meeting and award certificates to four schools that moved from accredited with warning status to full accreditation.

Virginia High School League Update – Ken Tilley reported that the league had a good year. He also said the VHSL Executive Committee will continue to encourage schools to provide education programs for coaches and to see if a program can be developed with the Department of Education and institutions of higher education. Dr. McCracken said the main issue is the cost of \$110 per person. Mr. Tilley assured the council that the league will continue to work with superintendents to take care of their concerns. A suggestion was made that the league distribute curriculum information for coaches. Mr. Tilley said the VHSL will continue to do that and also look at other options.

Mr. Tilley also reported that the VHSL may have its first Public Charter School member very soon. Also on the horizon, he said, are additional applications for Governor’s Schools’ membership. Mr. Tilley said feedback from the VHSL’s student leadership conference held last month was “terrific.” Next year’s conference will be held at Hermitage High School in Henrico County.

ESEA Update/School Choice Discussion – This item was dealt with by Ken Magill and Charles Finley. Dr. Magill noted that the Board of Education is developing a consolidated plan for the new No Child Left Behind Act. He referred to a chart, distributed to each member of the council, that provides information on all aspects of the new law. In response to a question about certification of public schools, the council was told that the Department of Education is trying to receive guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. The suggestion was made that a question-and-answer memo

on the new act be made available to superintendents. Dr. DeMary agreed to this suggestion.

During the discussion of school choice provided by the federal act, Charles Finley pointed out that some small school divisions may not have space to comply with the regulation. He said 35 schools in Virginia may be in that position.

Dr. DeMary pointed out that the Department of Education has to develop criteria for supplemental educational services that are available in school divisions. She said the Department of Education will need to know what is available locally, and that information will be given to the Board of Education. One of the major concerns, she said, will be special education and what can be done to increase students' achievement. Superintendents will receive the request within a week or so.

Other News -

Harry Ward congratulated Dr. DeMary for her reappointment by Governor Warner and members of the council concurred.

Dr. Butler announced that superintendents are invited to attend a meeting on June 12, beginning at 9 a.m., at the Performing Arts Center at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, regarding the Public-Private Partnership legislation passed by the recent session of the Virginia General Assembly. The program is sponsored by McGuireWoods LLP, the Virginia Municipal League, the Virginia Association of Counties, and VASS.

Dr. Jenney said he has been told that DARE money cannot be used any longer. Dr. DeMary said she was not aware of that and she promised to get an answer to his inquiry. She said there is a need to have a bulletin board in the Department of Education to provide an interchange of ideas with school divisions. She also expressed her desire to attend superintendents' regional meetings during the next school year. She congratulated four members of the council for being elected regional superintendents of the year. They are Dr. Trollinger, Dr. Blackmon, Dr. DeBolt, and Dr. Shannon.

Prior to adjournment, Dr. DeMary distributed framed certificates to retiring members of the council thanking them for their service. The certificates were given to Dr. Trollinger, Dr. Blackmon, Dr. Jenney, and to Dr. McCracken.