

Meeting of the Superintendent's Leadership Advisory Council

Friday, June 27, 2003

Present: Superintendents' Group: J. Roy Geiger, II, Jonathan L. Lewis, Dale E. Sander, H. D. Northern, Jr., David G. Melton, Frederick S. Morton, IV, Larry Massie (for Gwen E. Edwards), Donald E. Stowers (for Samuel S. Cook), Stewart D. Roberson, Edgar B. Hatrick, III, Alfred R. Butler, IV, executive director, and Andy Stamp, assistant executive director, VASS.

Department of Education: Jo Lynne DeMary, Patricia Wright, Anne Wescott, Charles Finley, Douglas Cox, Dan Timberlake, Shelley Loving-Ryder, Thomas Elliott, and Harry Smith.

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

- Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission Presentations

Bob Rotz, JLARC senior division chief, gave a status report on K-12 issues for 2003. The report included an update on funding Standards of Quality and education technology, best practices initiated by school divisions and support costs, and school performance data required by Senate Joint Resolution 349 approved by the 2003 session of the Virginia General Assembly.

Mr. Rotz said that the JLARC Web site for reports on best practices is still active and school divisions are encouraged to submit their ideas. He stated that JLARC intends to present "a useful and constructive final report" to the General Assembly, and he asked for help in informing superintendents of the study and obtaining comments prior to the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year. Fourteen of 20 planned site visits have been completed.

Hal Greer, assistant to Mr. Rotz, who is working on the public school performance study requested by the General Assembly (SJR 349), said test scores and demographics of the "best and worst" school divisions will be examined. Special attention will be given to schools that are performing well despite challenges. Site visits will be made to selected schools to obtain comments from teachers of core academic subjects and also from parents. He said the survey of teachers is planned tentatively for the third week in August. Dr. Morton suggested that the survey be postponed until the second or third week in September because of teachers' responsibilities involved in the opening of schools. Mr. Greer said a letter will be sent to superintendents notifying them of plans to talk with principals who may assist JLARC in contacting parents. He said the JLARC report is due to be presented in December.

- Standards of Quality Update

Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent for policy and public affairs, reported on proposed amendments to the Standards of quality for public schools that were approved by the Board of Education on June 25. A summary of the proposals that she said focused on policy issues and what is best for students was distributed to the council. The revisions are to be submitted to the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly.

Dan Timberlake, assistant superintendent for finance, reported on the major financial items in the SOQ revisions and the required state and local share of funding. Dr. DeMary emphasized the importance of the proposed amendments and encouraged the superintendents to support favorable action by the General Assembly. Dr. Butler commended the Board of Education for its work and for the standards that were approved.

- No Child Left Behind Act

Dr. Patricia Wright, assistant superintendent for instruction, presented information on the status of the *NCLB Act* in Virginia. Information distributed to the council included the timeline for the consolidated application adopted by the Board of Education and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. She noted that the state submitted under protest amendments to the state accountability plan related to 2002-2003 testing policies and the formula for determining adequate yearly progress for some LEP students and students with disabilities.

Information Dr. Wright presented referred to the Virginia Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, which has been approved as amended, details of the adequate yearly progress requirement, the identification of unsafe schools, and the timeline for Phase I submission of local consolidated applications for 2003-2004. Three regional technical assistance forums are planned for key instructional leaders and federal program coordinators to address 2003-2004 LEA Phase II of the *NCLB* application procedure. The forums are scheduled for July 17 from 1-4 p.m. at the Hotel Roanoke, July 22 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Newport News school administration office, and July 29 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Fulghum Center in Chesterfield County.

Dr. DeMary pointed out that as a result of the Standards of Learning, Virginia is ahead of some other states in the *NCLB* program, a fact not always recognized by federal officials.

Dr. DeMary said the Department of Education and division superintendents need to deliver the same message about the annual yearly progress requirement and tell

the public that school divisions are complying with state standards of accreditation. She emphasized the importance of the state and school divisions sending the same message regarding the *NCLB Act*.

- Student Information System

Lan Neugent, assistant superintendent for technology, reported on the Student Testing Accountability and Reporting System (STARS). He noted that the Department of Education is implementing a statewide longitudinal student records collection and information system to collect data about students and their performance in public schools. He presented a list of tasks, timelines, and responsibilities for the project. Mr. Neugent said more data is needed on students, who he assured the council, will not be identified.

- Proposed Licensure Regulations

Dr. Thomas Elliott, assistant superintendent for teacher education and professional licensure, distributed a summary of proposed revisions to licensure regulations for school personnel that were reviewed by the Board of Education for the first time on June 25. Dr. Elliott said approval of the proposals is an 18-months undertaking that includes compliance with Administrative Process Act requirements and public hearings. He also said that the proposed revisions meet requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, and he asked council members for their help in the adoption process.

- Teacher Education and Licensure System (TEAL)

Patty Pitts, director of professional licensure, noted that Virginia was notified on September 25, 2002, by the U.S. Department of Education that Virginia had received a Teacher Quality enhancement Grant amounting to \$13.5 million over a three-year period to assist the state in addressing critical teacher quality initiatives. One of the initiatives of the grant is to develop a comprehensive data system. The first phase of the project is the implementation of the Teacher Education and Licensure (TEAL) system that will be implemented in two phases. The first phase will replace the existing licensure system in the Department of Education, expand data collection capabilities, and provide standard and ad hoc reporting. The date for the activation of Phase I is scheduled for July 24, 2003. The current system will be discontinued at noon on July 24 to install the new system that is anticipated to be operational on July 28.

The second phase, to be operational by the end of the year, includes Web-enabled submission of instructional personnel data; Web-based licensure information for the public; teacher application status access for school divisions; and automated

bulk licensure renewal. Other enhancements will include Web submissions for college and university annual reports and program completer information.

- Reauthorizing of IDEA

Douglas Cox, assistant superintendent for instructional support services, presented information about the last item on the council's agenda. He discussed the similarities and differences of legislation (HR1350) already passed by the House of Representatives and a bill being considered by the U.S. Senate (SB 1248). He noted that the House-approved legislation provides the option for binding arbitration in lieu of a due process hearing; the Senate bill would eliminate the option for binding arbitration.

In the absence of other business the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the council is scheduled for September 12, 2003.