

Meeting of the Superintendent's Leadership Advisory Council

Friday, February 13, 2004

Present: Superintendents' Group: J. Roy Geiger, II, Jonathan L. Lewis, Dale E. Sander, H. D. Northern, Jr., David G. Melton, Frederick S. Morton, IV, Samuel S. Cook, Gwen E. Edwards, Margaret V. Blackmon, Stewart D. Roberson, John H. Kidd, Edgar B. Hatrick, III, Alfred R. Butler, IV, executive director, and Andy Stamp, assistant executive director, VASS, and Walter A. McFarlane, superintendent, Virginia Department of Correctional Education.

Department of Education: Jo Lynne DeMary, Pat Wright, Dan Timberlake, Anne Wescott, Shelley Loving-Ryder, Thomas Elliott, and Harry L. Smith.

Dr. DeMary announced that the agenda for the meeting included a presentation by Mr. Maurice Jones, commissioner of the Department of Social Services, and members of his staff dealing with federal matching funds for child care services for low-income families.

The agenda for the meeting, in addition to that subject included the following items:

Legislation – Anne Wescott presented a report on the status of bills and joint resolutions in the current session of the Virginia General Assembly and discussed legislation that was of special interest to members of the council.

Budget – Dan Timberlake reported on the status of action on the state budget. He distributed a copy of a briefing on direct aid to public education for the 2004-2006 biennium that was presented to the House Appropriation Committee on January 21, 2004, and responded to questions from members of the council.

He referred to differences in funding proposals by Governor Warner and the House and Senate which he said are far apart in solving the budget problem. He said that as quickly as information is available about the House and Senate recommendations on the budget, it will be sent to superintendents.

Mr. Timberlake said his office this year is going to run two ADM reports. One will be just as it has been in the past; the second will be new as part of the student information system. He said a cutoff date will have to be set for receiving new ADM

figures, probably sometime in May. In response to a question, Dr. DeMary said the Department of Education will request clarification from the Virginia Retirement System about proposals for local contributions to the retirement system.

Department of Social Services Matching Funds – Mr. Jones provided information about the child care program administered by the Department of Social Services financed with federal funds for children of low-income families. About 55,000 children are involved in the program, he said.

The commissioner said his agency is trying to find appropriate local funds spent on before- and/or after-school programs that can be used as matching funds in order to get more federal money for the program. He said his department is looking for pilot sites to work with it and explore how child care funds are spent and to identify qualified matching funds. He said his department prefers divisions that have a high ratio of free and reduced price lunch programs.

He asked superintendents' assistance in providing information on before- and after-school programs, on the number of children age 13, and information on the number of children who qualify for free and reduced price lunches. He said his agency is seeking to expand services for child care programs that support school readiness, for subsidies to expand child care programs, and to expand child care and development funds for before- and after-school programs in school facilities.

Instructional Report – Dr. Elliott reported that all except 13 school divisions have responded to the Department of Education's request for data on instructional personnel. A question was asked about how to report provisionally licensed teachers. Dr. Elliott said that a proposal will be presented to the Board of Education that Virginia establish a definition of an alternate route to certification to meet requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act* for the identification of highly qualified teachers. The proposal establishes Virginia's provisional license as an alternate route to certification that would satisfy the *NCLB Act*. Superintendents will be notified of the board's action. Dr. Hatrick commended personnel in the Division of Teacher Education and Professional Licensure for all that they do for the teacher licensing process.

No Child Left Behind Act – Dr. DeMary distributed copies of a letter written to the Utah superintendent of public instruction concerning the consequences that could result if a state or school division wishes not to participate in the *No Child Left Behind Act*. She stated that as long as a state takes *NCLB* funds there are requirements that school divisions must meet, including Adequate Yearly Progress, highly qualified teachers, and testing.

In response to a question, Dr. DeMary provided information about a report by the federal government that Virginia had not used a substantial amount of federal funds during the 2000-2002 fiscal years. She noted that the report was made several weeks before the state's deadline to receive reimbursements authorized for the federal fiscal year 2001. She noted that the federal report did not reflect the fact that states and school

districts have 27 months to spend federal money received for public education. At the time the report was issued, the state still had time remaining to spend the federal grants.

Dr. DeMary encouraged school divisions to exercise the flexibility provided by the Board of Education regarding graduation requirements for students. She also referred to a superintendent's memorandum dated February 13, 2004, concerning statewide availability of the online Standards of Learning tutorial for English/Reading. The tutorial, she noted was piloted successfully in the fall and winter of 2003-2004 as part of Governor Mark Warner's Project Graduation initiative. As the memo points out, schools may now enroll seniors who have not yet passed the English/Reading Standards of Learning assessment. The tutorial is designed to determine students' academic needs through online assessment and tailor Web-based lessons to meet those needs. When all recommended lessons are completed, students will take a final online assessment, and if they are successful, they should be well prepared for the English/Reading Standards of Learning examination. Online training and regional training sessions will be offered by Princeton Review.

The superintendent also announced that she plans to meet with superintendents' regional study groups throughout the spring.