

## VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Issues for Consideration in Developing Regulations Governing Virtual Schools

#### School Attendance/Truancy

- What provisions need to be in place to monitor attendance and prevent truancy when full-time public virtual school students receive instruction in their homes and never attend a 'brick and mortar' school?

**The 180 day/990 Hour Requirement for a School Year** - There is no provision in § 22.1-98 of the *Code of Virginia* to allow a waiver of the 180 days/990 hours requirement for students taking coursework virtually. School divisions that do not meet this requirement, except when there are severe weather conditions or other states of emergency, are subject to the loss of basic aid. Furthermore, the compulsory attendance provisions in § 22.1-254 of the *Code* hold parents responsible for ensuring that their children are in school during regular school hours. Given these statutory constraints:

- How can the school division ensure that the full-time virtual students are meeting these statutory requirements if the instruction takes place on schedules that are different from traditional schools?
- What happens if a full-time virtual school student completes the curriculum for his grade level before the end of the traditional 'brick and mortar' school year? Should the student progress to the next grade level or should the student be provided with enrichment activities for the grade level just completed?

#### Technology

- Is there a role for the school division to provide technology (equipment and connectivity) to full-time public virtual school students?
- What factors need to be considered to ensure that all students have access to virtual instruction?
- Are there any special safeguards that need to be addressed related to online Standards of Learning tests for students who are in a full-time virtual setting?

**Staffing** - Section 22.1-253.13:2 of the *Code of Virginia* permits the exemption of virtual school programs from the SOQ staffing standards. The Board of Education's guidelines for multidivision online providers specify that the pupil-teacher ratio should not exceed 150 students per one FTE teacher.

- Should the regulations establish staffing standards for virtual schools? If so, what should they be?

- What industry standards exist for virtual instruction?

### **Special Services**

- What provisions need to be in place to ensure that services related to special education, 504 plans, gifted education services, remediation, and services to English Language Learners are provided?

### **Instruction and Related Issues**

- What provisions need to be in place to ensure that full-time virtual students have access to physical education, career and technical education, and laboratory science courses?
- What provisions need to be in place to ensure that library services are available to full-time virtual students?
- What provisions need to be in place to provide counseling services are available to full-time virtual students?

### **Extracurricular Activities**

- What provisions need to be in place to ensure that public virtual school students are able to participate in extracurricular activities for students?
- How are students afforded access to afterschool and extracurricular activities if the students aren't residents in the school division of enrollment, and don't live in proximity of the serving school division?