

**MINUTES**  
**Virginia Board of Education**  
**Standing Committee on the Standards of Quality (SOQ)**  
**July 25, 2012**  
**2:30 p.m.**  
**Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building**

**Welcome and Opening Comments**

Dr. Billy Cannaday, Chair, called the meeting to order with the following Board members present: Mr. Foster, Mrs. Atkinson, Ms. Mack, Mr. Braunlich, Mrs. Sears and Dr. McLaughlin. Dr. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was also present.

Dr. Cannaday thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to continue the review of the SOQ by hearing comments and recommendations from several important stakeholder groups. He also reviewed the timeline for completion of the review process: September 26 – the committee will discuss draft recommendations and hear public comment; September 27 – first review of the Board’s recommended revisions to the SOQ; October – public hearings throughout the state; and, November 29 – final review of recommendations that the Board will be sending to the General Assembly.

**Presentations to the Committee and Discussion**

*Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA)* – Mr. Wendell Roberts, Staff Attorney, provided written comments to the committee. Mr. Roberts commented that the VSBA’s foundational concern is adequate funding of the SOQ. Mr. Roberts stated that aside from funding, VSBA members’ ideas and concerns focus on: increased staffing ratios for school-based administrators; redefining and reallocating positions based on shifts in the development and use of technology; SOQ formula adjustments based on the growing statewide ELL population; the need for more school guidance counselors due to the new and varying roles of guidance staff; and the setting of new SOQ for health and wellness, music and art. Mr. Roberts provided specific recommendations in each of these areas.

*Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS)* – Dr. Ben Kiser, President and Dr. Steven Staples, Executive Director, each provided written comments. Dr. Staples commented in three areas: greater flexibility in the implementation of the SOQ staffing standards; adequate state funding for any new initiatives or requirements; and the grounding of the SOQ in actual practice rather than an arbitrary calculation designed to limit or reduce state funding to personnel. Dr. Kiser focused his comments on seven areas: emphasize greater local control over educational issues while maintaining state standards for student performance; grant greater flexibility to local school divisions currently meeting state expectations; redefine the Instructional Programs Standards to emphasize creativity, problem-solving, technology and the application of information rather than the acquisition of information; include professional development expectations and revised licensure standards that include proficiency in data review and analysis; implement multiple student assessment measures to define “student learning;” provide a detailed definition of what “college and career ready” means; and define and develop an integrated model of rigorous and core performance competencies.

*Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals (VASSP)* – Mr. Keith Perrigan, President, provided written comments. Mr. Perrigan reviewed Goals One, Five and Seven in the Board’s Comprehensive Plan. He recommended that teachers and administrators be offered sufficient professional training opportunities; that the state support its expectations and mandates with the necessary funding to retain and attract highly qualified professionals; and that the Board determine which expectations and aspirations in the Board’s Comprehensive Plan are necessary to a quality education and include them as requirements in the SOQ. He also recommended a statewide survey to ascertain local expenditures and compare them to state funding. The study should identify prevailing practice and investigate the reasons why local school divisions institute many of these programs and hire additional personnel without state funding. There should also be clarification concerning what is unfunded or inadequately funded in the SOQ, such as assistant principal positions and professional development opportunities.

*Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals (VAESP)* – Ms. Deborah Frazier, President, provided written comments. Ms. Frazier focused her comments on Standards Two and Five of the SOQ with regard to guiding question one. She asked that Standard Five be revised to provide newly appointed principals with zero to three years’ experience with a high-quality mentoring program at the local or state level. Ms. Frazier proposed that the number of principals be changed at all school levels in Standard Two to one full-time, to be employed on a 12-month basis and the number of assistant principals be changed to one full-time at 600 students at all school levels. She further recommended that Standard Two provide that school divisions that employ a sufficient number of assistant principals to meet the staffing requirement may assign assistant principals to schools according to the area of greatest need, regardless of whether the schools are elementary, middle or secondary. Ms. Frazier also recommended that a review of the equivalencies for Librarians and Guidance Counselors be undertaken.

*Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (VASCD)* – Mr. Daryl Chesley, President, provided written comments. Mr. Chesley asked the Board to keep the best interest of the child at the center of their decision-making processes. He commented on question four and asked that the Board focus on providing flexibility to individual school divisions so they could make decisions to meet their individual needs. He also asked the Board to involve experts in the field in the decision-making process. He asked that the Board support the following in order to enhance student success: smaller student to teacher ratios; quality instruction by qualified teachers; quality leadership by qualified administrators; quality professional development for every educator; and fully funded initiatives.

## **Public Comment and Discussion**

*JustChildren* – Ms. Crystal Shin, Staff Attorney, provided written comments. In her comments, Ms. Shin addressed guiding questions one and two that were before the Board. In response to guiding question one, Ms. Shin stated that in order for the Board to provide leadership to create safe and secure schools, it must acknowledge the role of support staff in the provision of education. Ms. Shin asked the Board to identify what support staff and resources are needed to address barriers to graduation, such as behavior and attendance. In response to question two, Ms. Shin stated that the Board took an important step in tying high school accreditation to graduation and completion rates. But, the Board did not examine what resources were necessary

to meet the goals. Ms. Shin asked the Board to consider what resources are needed to address attendance problems and challenging behaviors, reduce school exclusion and increase graduation rates.

At the conclusion of the presentations, Dr. Cannaday thanked the presenters for their thoughtful responses to the questions presented by the Board and the rationale provided by the presenters for their recommendations. He also stated that the Board appreciated the new ideas and approaches presented and the suggestions that spoke to greater flexibility. He also acknowledged the organizations' willingness to partner with the Board in making decisions about the SOQ. He then opened the meeting to the Board members for their comments or questions.

Comments were made regarding the importance of mentors for new principals and the specificity of so many of the recommendations. A question was asked regarding the recommendation for greater flexibility at the local level concerning how far down the flexibility should go, i.e., to the school level so individual principals could make their own decisions. Further comment was requested on that point. Another question was asked regarding how the Board keeps track of the comments and ensures that it addresses all of them. Mrs. Anne Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications, responded that comments are noted in the committee's minutes and that a matrix would be created detailing all of the comments and their disposition.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.