

# **Standards of Quality (SOQ) (A Shared Responsibility)**

**Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.  
President, Virginia Board of Education**

**Virginia Board of Education  
Committee on the Standards of Quality  
July 27, 2016**



# Purpose and Intent of SOQ

## Shared Goal for Public Education:

**“Enable each student to develop skills necessary for success in school, preparation for life, and reaching full potential”**

Code of Virginia § 22.1-253.13:1.A



# Purpose and Intent of SOQ

## Shared Commitment to Quality Education:

- *High-quality instructional personnel*
- *A learning environment designed to promote student achievement*
- *Quality instruction enabling each student to become a productive and educated citizen*
- *Adequate commitment of resources*

Code of Virginia § 22.1-253.13:1.A

# ***Current Priority Needs of Public Schools in Virginia***

- **Improve accountability system**
- **Build capacity in schools and school divisions**
- **Foster positive, safe, healthy school climates**



# “Emerging” Needs

- Student Preparation
- Changes to Accountability System

# Determining Priorities for Resources

## School division challenges and needs:

- Support capacity in schools?
- Teacher and school Leaders?
- Support for challenged divisions and schools?
- High school redesign support?
- Professional development support?



# Needs related to Student Preparation



# School Counselor Staffing

**Issue: Additional school counselor positions needed to support student preparation efforts related to Profile of a Graduate.**

- Individual student planning time will be critical to implement the redesigned high school diploma.
- Counselor duties have expanded to include non-counseling roles, such as: testing, clerical, discipline, social worker.
- Existing Virginia counselor to student ratio is approximately 1:320.
- SOQ-funded positions are provided for approximately 1:410.
- The American School Counselor Association's recommended staff ratio is 1:250 (4 positions per 1,000).

**Consideration: What would the appropriate staffing ratio for school counselors be to meet this future demand?**

*Standard 2*

# Career and Technical Education Staffing

**Issues:** Career and Technical Education (CTE) staffing may not meet existing and future needs.

- CTE staffing ratios may have become outdated since the implementation of curricular pathways that require high-tech equipment and specialized instruction.
- High school redesign and Profile of a Graduate may create more demand for CTE staff as career exploration and work-based learning experiences expand.

**Consideration:** Will CTE staffing resources be adequate with the implementation of the high school redesign?

*Standard 2*



# Professional Development

**Issue:** Successful implementation of the high school redesign will require adequate professional development at all levels, before, during and after implementation.

- Teaching has been focused on instruction techniques and assessment geared toward content knowledge.
- The teacher workforce will need introduction to new concepts, such as capstone projects, independent study, portfolios and work-based learning.
- Professional development will be needed for principals and teachers on the leadership skills, instructional strategies and assessment methods needed to implement the “5 C’s.”
- Discrete state aid to school divisions for professional development is not a component of the SOQ.

**Considerations:** What are the professional development needs associated with the Profile of a Graduate?

*Standard 5*



# Awareness of Available Pathways

**Issue:** Currently, schools are required to notify parents and students of AP, IB, and Governor's school opportunities; similar notification is not required for career and technical education (CTE) opportunities.

- Awareness of all possible pathways to graduation will be critical as the high school redesign is implemented.

**Consideration:** Should parents and students be assured that they are informed of all educational opportunities, regardless of student performance or selected pathways?

*Standard 1*



# **Build Capacity:**

***Identify where local practices exceed state  
recognized staffing practices***



# Assistant Principals

**Issue:** The number of assistant principal positions funded through the SOQ does not align with local practices

- School divisions employ 2,554 assistant principals, while SOQ funds are only provided for 923 positions.
- Existing Virginia assistant principal to student ratio is approximately 1:475.
- SOQ-funded positions are provided for approximately 1:1,315.
- Prior Boards have recommended 1:400 students (2.5 positions per 1,000)

**Consideration:** What is the appropriate state-recognized staffing ratio for assistant principals?

*Standard 2*



# Elementary Principals

**Issue: Providing effective leadership in small elementary schools on a part-time basis.**

- Elementary schools of 299 or fewer students are only provided a half-time principal.
- Approximately 12 percent of elementary schools have 299 or fewer students.
- Most small elementary schools are provided a full-time principal using local funds.

**Consideration: Is a part-time principal sufficient for small schools? Would providing additional flexibility to deploy principals based on need be appropriate?**

*Standard 2*



# Support Position Cap

**Issue:** The Appropriation Act has capped the number of SOQ-funded support positions at the ratio of 1 support position for every 4.03 instructional positions.

- This ratio was selected based upon existing conditions as of 2009, and has not been adjusted to reflect changes in local staffing practices.
- Economic conditions have since improved.
- This overrides Standard Two, which establishes that prevailing staffing practices should dictate the number of funded positions.

**Consideration:** Should the the Appropriation Act be amended to eliminate the cap on support position funding?

*Standard 2*



## **Build Capacity:**

***Provide school divisions with flexibility while ensuring a minimum level of quality is maintained***



# Support Positions

- **Issue:** No minimum staffing level exists for student support positions such as school psychologists, school nurses, or social workers.
  - Since 2008, the number of:
    - Students living in poverty has increased by 40%
    - English Language Learners has increased by 37%
    - Students with autism has increased by 45%
    - Students with other health impairments has increased by 10%
  - School divisions may opt to divert state funding for support positions toward instructional positions.
- **Consideration:** Should minimum staffing levels be established for these positions, or should local discretion remain?

Standard 2



# Recession-Era Staffing Waivers

**Issue: Since 2009, Appropriation Act language has waived significant staffing requirements in Standard 2, a measure taken in response to the financial crisis.**

- **These waivers override staffing requirements for:**
  - Elementary resource teachers
  - Remediation positions
  - ESL teachers
  - CTE teachers (unless federal requirements apply)
  - Maximum student to teacher ratios have also been increased by one student.
  - Gifted Teachers
  - Guidance counselors (new hires only)
  - Librarians (new hires only)
  - Technology support positions
- **Economic conditions have since improved.**
- **These provisions undermine significant parts of Standard 2, which is intended to ensure a minimum level of staffing across the Commonwealth.**

**Consideration: How are school divisions utilizing these waivers? Where have school divisions diverting the resources associated with these positions? Do these waivers continue to be appropriate?**



# SOQ Review Cycle

**Issue:** The Board's SOQ recommendations are transmitted to the Governor mid-biennium.

- SOQ recommendations could better inform Governor's biennial budget, which is developed in odd-numbered years.
- Consistent with prior Board recommendations.

**Recommendation:** Shift the Board's SOQ review from even to odd-numbered years.



# Next Steps

- **July/August**    **Public Hearings**
- **September**    **First Review of Proposed Recommendations**
- **October**        **Final Review**

