

DRAFT MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
Standing Committee on the Standards of Quality
Wednesday, September 21, 2016
10:00 a.m.
Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building

Welcome and Opening Comments

The following Board of Education (Board) members were present for the September 21, 2016 meeting of the Committee on the Standards of Quality: Dr. Billy Cannaday, Jr.; James Dillard; Daniel A. Gecker; Elizabeth Lodol; Sal Romero, Jr.; and Joan Wodiska. Dr. Steven Staples, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, was also present. Diane Atkinson, Dr. Oktay Baysal, and Wesley J. Bellamy were absent.

Dr. Cannaday, chairman of this committee, convened the meeting at 10:05am.

Approval of the Minutes from the July 27, 2016 Committee Meeting

Mr. Gecker made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 27, 2016 committee meeting. Mr. Dillard seconded the motion, and the draft minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Chris Duncombe with the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis spoke on behalf of the Alliance for Virginia's Students in support of the Board conducting an in-depth study into the SOQ funding formula, pre-recession funding for support services, and funding to serve at-risk students.

Megan Castille, president of the Fairfax Association of School Social Workers, spoke in favor of school social workers and psychologists being counted as categorically distinct from support services for purposes of the SOQ. She also spoke in favor of increasing staffing ratios for these positions.

Mary Jo Fields with the Virginia Municipal League spoke about budget amendments that were submitted during the 2016 General Assembly session as a way of demonstrating their support for additional funding for assistant principals and instructional aides.

Presentations

Dr. Cynthia Cave, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) made the following presentation:

[First Review of Recommendations to Revise the Standards of Quality](#)

The Board had the following comments and questions:

- Precision of language in the Standards of Quality (SOQ) was discussed. Several Board members expressed interest in clarifying the terminology used, so as to be clear what positions are being discussed – i.e. social workers vs. social work administrators.
- The role of the Board was discussed. Specifically, Board members discussed how the role of the Board fits with the role of the General Assembly in making, amending, and funding educational policies. The Board’s role is to promulgate educational standards, and the General Assembly makes adjustments and funds them.
- One Board member noted that prevailing practice needs to be more clearly defined—it is more than simply what is being done. Substantive justification for the prevailing practice is necessary. The rationale behind the prevailing practice should be the focus.
- The Board has a responsibility to allocate positions in the SOQ for what is needed, not simply what is wanted, in order to deliver students a high quality education.
- The Board would like additional details so as to more fully understand the responsibilities and duties of each position in the SOQ.
- One Board member noted that school districts have different needs. Schools with high levels of poverty or large populations of English language learners have certain staffing needs specific to those circumstances.
- The Board needs to most carefully consider the needs of the schools that are struggling, as those schools need the most state support.
- Professional development and preparing staff for the needs of specific student populations was identified as a priority.
- Educational attainment levels—meaning students graduating on time with credentials that demonstrate their ability to make a contribution in the marketplace—help make Virginia a desirable place to do business and thereby boost the state economy. Quality educational infrastructure is key to the success of the Commonwealth.
- The changes to the SOQ must be provided to the public with context. Such context should include background details and substantive reasoning for staffing needs and prevailing practice.
- The timing of the review of the SOQ was discussed in relation to the timing of the General Assembly session. The Board expressed a desire to get consensus on the SOQ well before the General Assembly session begins.

- Board members discussed how to best advocate for educational needs with legislators during the General Assembly session.
- Board members expressed appreciation for the quality information that was received from the public at the public hearings over the summer.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

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