

# Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_

Date: February 25, 2010

**Topic:** Report on Testing Irregularities in Norfolk City Public Schools

**Presenter:** Mrs. Shelley L. Loving-Ryder, Assistant Superintendent for Student Assessment and School Improvement  
Mr. H. Douglas Cox, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Special Education and Student Services

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**Origin:**

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by  
 State or federal law or regulation  
 Board of Education regulation  
 Other: Previous Board Resolution \_\_\_\_\_

Action requested at this meeting

**Previous Review/Action:**

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action  
date:  
action:

**Background Information:**

Over the past several months staff at the Virginia Department of Education have received reports of testing irregularities in a number of Norfolk City schools. Some of these reports were investigated by Norfolk City Public Schools staff; one state investigation was conducted at Lafayette Winona Middle School by staff from the Virginia Department of Education's Division of Special Education and Student Services. Lafayette Winona Middle School was conditionally accredited by the Board

of Education in September 2009 based on an approved corrective action plan for the 2009-2010 academic year. As a result of testing concerns within the school division, in January 2010 the Superintendent of Public Instruction offered technical assistance to the superintendent of Norfolk City Schools in 1) the use of the state-developed criteria in identifying students for participation in the Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA), 2) preparation of work samples for inclusion in the VGLA collections of evidence, and 3) best practices in test administration for the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. The division superintendent accepted the Department's offer of technical assistance. Additionally, in February 2010 the Norfolk City school board chair contacted the Department of Education and requested assistance in reviewing the division's implementation of the state testing programs.

**Summary of Major Elements:**

A summary of the reported testing irregularities in Norfolk City Public Schools will be provided as well as information on the department's plans for technical assistance to the school division.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept the report.

**Impact on Resources:**

Existing resources within the department will be used to cover the costs of technical assistance.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

The Department of Education will continue to monitor implementation of the Corrective Action Plan required as a result of the investigation at Lafayette Winona Middle School and will provide technical assistance regarding the appropriate implementation of the state assessment programs.