

# Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item



**Agenda Item:** W

**Date:** September 27, 2012

<b>Title</b>	First Review of Recommendations to Revise the Standards of Quality		
<b>Presenter</b>	Ms. Anne D. Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications		
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**Purpose of Presentation:**

Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

**Previous Review or Action:**

No previous review or action.

**Action Requested:**

Action will be requested at a future meeting. Specify anticipated date below:

Date: November 29, 2012

Action: Final review

**Alignment with Board of Education Goals: Please indicate (X) all that apply:**

	Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn
	Goal 2: Accountability of Student Learning
	Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners
	Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills
	Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers and Administrators
X	Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success
	Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools
	Other Priority or Initiative. Specify:

**Background Information and Statutory Authority:**

Goal 6: The Standards of Quality is the foundation program for public education in Virginia. Therefore, the review of the Standards of Quality could well address all seven of the Board of Education’s goals. The primary goal that the review of the Standards of Quality addresses is that the Board will provide leadership to develop and implement state law in ways that improve and expand opportunities for all of Virginia’s schoolchildren to excel academically.

Article VIII, § 2 of the *Constitution of Virginia* requires the Board of Education to determine and prescribe Standards of Quality for the public schools in Virginia. The *Constitution* says:

“Standards of quality for the several school divisions shall be determined and prescribed from time to time by the Board of Education, subject to revision only by the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall determine the manner in which funds are to be provided for the cost of maintaining an educational program meeting the prescribed standards

of quality, and shall provide for the apportionment of the cost of such program between the Commonwealth and the local units of government comprising such school divisions. Each unit of local government shall provide its portion of such cost by local taxes or from other available funds.”

The *Code of Virginia* requires the Board of Education to review the Standards of Quality every two years. Section 22.1-18.01 of the *Code* says, in part:

“To ensure the integrity of the standards of quality, the Board of Education shall, in even-numbered years, exercise its constitutional authority to determine and prescribe the standards, subject to revision only by the General Assembly, by reviewing the standards and either (i) proposing amendments to the standards or (ii) making a determination that no changes are necessary....”

The *Code* also requires that the Board’s annual report to the Governor and General Assembly include any recommendations for revisions to the Standards of Quality. Section 22.1-18 of the *Code* says, in part:

“...the Board of Education shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a report on the condition and needs of public education in the Commonwealth and shall identify any school divisions and the specific schools therein which have failed to establish and maintain schools meeting the existing prescribed standards of quality. Such standards of quality shall be subject to revision only by the General Assembly, pursuant to Article VIII, Section 2 of the Constitution of Virginia. Such report shall include a complete listing of the current standards of quality for the Commonwealth's public schools, together with a justification for each particular standard, how long each such standard has been in its current form, and whether the Board recommends any change or addition to the standards of quality.”

On August 7, 1971, the Board of Education adopted the first Standards of Quality (SOQ). They were revised by the General Assembly in 1972 and adopted as uncodified Acts of Assembly. In 1974, they were revised into eight standards. In 1984, they were codified by the General Assembly, and in 1988 they were arranged into their current format.

The Board of Education revised its bylaws in October 2001 to require the Board to “determine the need for a review of the SOQ from time to time but no less than once every two years. The Standing Committee on the Standards of Quality was created by resolution of the Board of Education in November 2001 and held its first meeting in January 2002. It completed its work on its first set of recommendations in June 2003, for consideration by the 2004 General Assembly. Since 2004, it has submitted its recommendations to the General Assembly not less than once every two years.

The Board of Education adopted the work plan for reviewing the SOQ on May 24, 2012. In accordance with the work plan, the Board’s SOQ Committee met on April 25, May 23, June 27, and July 25, 2012. Public comments were heard at each meeting, and the Board invited stakeholders to present their recommendations at the June and July meetings.

### **Summary of Important Issues:**

The Board has received comments from 1,215 individuals and 19 school divisions and organizations. Many of the individuals and organizations have signed a petition initiated by the Alliance for Virginia's Students, including the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis, the Legal Aid Justice Center's

JustChildren Program, Virginia Association of Counties, Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, Virginia Education Association, Virginia First Cities Coalition, Virginia Municipal League, Virginia PTA, and Voices for Virginia's Children.

Based on public comments received, the recommendations to revise the Standards of Quality are as follows:

1. The Board of Education would reaffirm its support of its recommendations from prior years that have not yet been adopted or funded by the General Assembly. These recommendations would:
  - Require one full-time principal in every elementary school;
  - Require one full-time assistant principal for every 400 students (K-12);
  - Reduce the speech-language pathologist caseload from 68 to 60 students;
  - Require one reading specialist for every 1,000 students (K-12);
  - Require one mathematics specialist for every 1,000 students (K-8);
  - Require one data coordinator for every 1,000 students (K-12); and
  - Establish a pupil-teacher ratio for students who are blind or vision impaired.
2. The Board of Education would request the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to conduct a study of the Standards of Quality to assist in determining whether “SOQ funding is realistic in relation to the Commonwealth’s current educational needs and practices.”
3. The Board would propose legislation to shift the review of the Standards of Quality from even to odd-numbered years to be aligned more effectively with the legislative budget process. This would mean that the Board would make its recommendations prior to the 60-day session during which the biennial budget is adopted. The current law requires the review to be in even-numbered years, which is immediately prior to the “short” (46-day) session during which amendments to the biennial budget are considered.

**Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:**

The impact on state funds for the review of the Standards of Quality is not expected to be significant and can be absorbed within current resources. The state cost of the recommendations that the Board has adopted in previous years is estimated to be \$224.5 million in FY 2013 and \$226.5 million in FY 2014, based on Chapter 3, 2012 Special Session I.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

There are four public hearings planned throughout the Commonwealth in October. The final review and approval is planned for the November 29, 2012 meeting.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:** The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board accept the recommendations to revise to the Standards of Quality for first review.

**Summary of Cost Estimates of Unfunded Standards of Quality (SOQ) Recommendations of the Board of Education**

		Based on Chapter 3, 2012 Special Session I (Updated August 2012)	
		FY 2013	FY 2014
Scenario Number	Unfunded Changes to the SOQ Recommended by the Board of Education:	State Cost	State Cost
2737	<b>Elementary Principal</b> Increase to one full-time position in every elementary school	\$7.8 million	\$8.0 million
2738	<b>Assistant Principal</b> One full-time assistant principal per 400 students (K-12)	\$70.3 million	\$70.6 million
2739	<b>Speech-Language Pathologist</b> Reduce caseload from 68 to 60 students	\$4.8 million	\$5.3 million
2740	<b>Reading Specialist</b> One reading specialist per 1,000 students (K-12)	\$51.2 million	\$51.3 million
2741	<b>Math Specialist</b> One math specialist per 1,000 students (K-8)	\$34.8 million	\$35.0 million
2742	<b>Testing Coordinator/Data Manager</b> One testing coordinator per 1,000 students (K-12)	\$51.2 million	\$51.3 million
2743	<b>Visually Impaired Standard</b> Level I, resource teacher, 24 to one; Level II, self-contained with an aide, 10 to one; self-contained without an aide, eight to one; or Level II, self-contained, student weight of 2.5	\$4.4 million	\$5.0 million
<b>Total for Specific Items Recommended by the Board of Education:</b>		<b>\$224.5 million</b>	<b>\$226.5 million</b>