

Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item



Agenda Item: C

Date: September 26, 2013

Title	First Review of Memorandum of Understanding for Norfolk City School Board for Lindenwood Elementary School as Required for Schools Denied Accreditation		
Presenter	Dr. Kathleen M. Smith, Director, Office of School Improvement, Division of Student Assessment and School Improvement		
E-mail	Kathleen.Smith@doe.virginia.gov	Phone	(804) 225-2865

Purpose of Presentation:

Action required by Board of Education regulation.

Previous Review or Action:

Previous review and action. Specify date and action taken below:

Date: October 25, 2012

Action: Approved Request for a Rating of *Conditionally Accredited* from Norfolk City School Board for Lindenwood Elementary School

Action Requested:

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

Date: October 24, 2013

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

X	Goal 1: Accountability for Student Learning
	Goal 2: Rigorous Standards to Promote College and Career Readiness
	Goal 3: Expanded Opportunities to Learn
	Goal 4: Nurturing Young Learners
	Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Educators
	Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success
	Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools
	Other Priority or Initiative. Specify:

Background Information and Statutory Authority:

Goal 1: Considering the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Attachment A, for Norfolk City School Board for Lindenwood Elementary supports accountability for student learning.

Section 8 VAC 20-131-315 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (SOA) requires certain actions for schools that are denied accreditation:

- A. Any school rated Accreditation Denied in accordance with 8 VAC 20-131-300 shall be subject to actions prescribed by the Board of Education and shall provide parents of enrolled students and other interested parties with the following:

1. Written notice of the school's accreditation rating within 30 calendar days of the notification of the rating from the Department of Education;
2. A copy of the school division's proposed corrective action plan, including a timeline for implementation, to improve the school's accreditation rating; and
3. An opportunity to comment on the division's proposed corrective action plan. Such public comment shall be received and considered by the school division prior to finalizing the school's corrective action plan and a Board of Education memorandum of understanding with the local school board.

B. Any school rated Accreditation Denied in accordance with [8 VAC 20-131-300](#) shall be subject to actions prescribed by the Board of Education and affirmed through a memorandum of understanding between the Board of Education and the local school board. The local school board shall submit a corrective action plan to the Board of Education for its consideration in prescribing actions in the memorandum of understanding within 45 days of the notification of the rating. The memorandum of understanding shall be entered into no later than November 1 of the academic year in which the rating is awarded.

The local board shall submit status reports detailing implementation of actions prescribed by the memorandum of understanding to the Board of Education. The status reports shall be signed by the school principal, division superintendent, and the chair of the local school board. The school principal, division superintendent, and the chair of the local school board may be required to appear before the Board of Education to present status reports.

The memorandum of understanding may also include but not be limited to:

1. Undergoing an educational service delivery and management review. The Board of Education shall prescribe the content of such review and approve the reviewing authority retained by the school division.
2. Employing a turnaround specialist credentialed by the state to address those conditions at the school that may impede educational progress and effectiveness and academic success.

Summary of Important Issues:

Lindenwood Elementary School is in *Accreditation Denied* status for 2013-2014 and is subject to actions prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) and affirmed through a MOU between the VBOE and Norfolk City School Board (Attachment A).

Lindenwood Elementary School in Norfolk City was previously identified as a persistently low-achieving Tier 1 school as defined by U. S. Department of Education (USED) for the 2010 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) federal funding. For the purposes of federal funding available under 1003(g) of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, a persistently lowest-achieving Tier 1 school is defined as a Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring based on the academic achievement of the "all students" group in reading/language arts and mathematics combined and the school has not reduced its failure rate in reading/language arts and/or mathematics by 10 to 15 percent each year for the past two years.

In 2011, Norfolk City Public Schools selected Pearson Education as its lead turnaround partner (LTP) for Lindenwood Elementary School and as such met the requirements of reconstitution as a change in

governance. The school selected to implement the Transformation Model, one of four approved USED models. The Norfolk City Public Schools was awarded 1003(g) SIG funds for a three-year total of \$1,758,099. Attachment B includes the action steps required of schools receiving SIG funds for the implementation of the Transformation Model. The school's current comprehensive school improvement plan that meets the requirements of the USED Transformation Model and will serve as a basis for the school's corrective action plan is available at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/school_improvement/priority_schools/cohort_applications/board_review/lindenwood.pdf.

Lindenwood Elementary School was granted the rating of *Conditionally Accredited* in 2011 and 2012 based on the school's reconstitution efforts and their implementation of the USED Transformation Model. Based on assessment data from 2012-2013, Norfolk City Public Schools has decided to not request to continue in the status of *Conditionally Accredited* in 2013.

State Accountability- Accreditation Designation

Accreditation Ratings for Lindenwood Elementary School

Year	Accreditation Rating	Based on Statewide Assessments in	Areas of Warning
2008-2009	<i>Accredited with Warning</i>	2007-2008	English, Mathematics, Science
2009-2010	<i>Accredited with Warning</i>	2008-2009	English
2010-2011	<i>Accredited with Warning</i>	2009-2010	English, History, Science
2011-2012	<i>Conditionally Accredited</i>	2010-2011	English
2012-2013	<i>Conditionally Accredited</i>	2011-2012	Mathematics
2013-2014	<i>Accreditation Denied</i>	2012-2013	English, Mathematics, Science, History

Federal Accountability

Federal Accountability Sanction for Lindenwood Elementary

Year	Based on Assessments in	Federal Status
2009-2010	2008-2009	Did not make AYP – Mathematics - Year 1
2010-2011	2009-2010	Did not make AYP – Mathematics - Year 2
2011-2012	2010-2011	Did not make AYP – Mathematics - Year 3
2012-2013	2011-2012	Identified as a Priority School
2013-2014	2012-2013	Identified as a Priority School

Federal Accountability Pass Rates

Lindenwood Elementary School

Assessment Type	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Reading	69%	65%	72%	80%	45%
Writing	68%	59%	78%	35%	63%
Mathematics	71%	71%	67%	32%	26%
Science	76%	68%	69%	75%	39%
History	80%	69%	81%	81%	55%

Technical Assistance

Lindenwood Elementary School implemented the USED Transformation Model with Pearson as its LTP as a part of the SIG program in their first and second year of *Conditionally Accredited* rating status. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has assigned a contractor to work with the LTP, school transformation team, principal, and the division to increase student achievement. In the upcoming year, technical assistance will be provided in core content areas, in teacher evaluation, and in other areas identified by VDOE that will assist the principal and teachers as needed throughout the year. As part of the Transformation Model requirements, the school will continue to provide quarterly reports to the Office of School Improvement (OSI). The VDOE contractor will review the quarterly reports and provide feedback to the transformation team.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

Federal funding will continue through September 30, 2014.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

The Memorandum of Understanding for Norfolk City School Board for Lindenwood Elementary School as required for schools denied accreditation is expected to come before the Virginia Board of Education for final review on October 24, 2013.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Virginia Board of Education accept for first review the Memorandum of Understanding with Norfolk City Public Schools.

**Memorandum of Understanding Between the
Virginia Board of Education and the
Norfolk City School Board (NCPS)**

I. Requirements

In an effort to provide continuous support to Lindenwood Elementary School, NCPS will comply with all requirements included in the approved *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver and the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (SOA).

A copy of the ESEA Flexibility Waiver submitted by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) is located at the following link:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/esea/va_esea_flexibility_application.pdf.

A copy of the SOA requirements for schools rated *Accredited with Warning* is located at the following link:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/school_improvement/academic_reviews/index.shtml.

Both the VDOE and NCPS should ensure that program activities are conducted in compliance with all applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations.

II. Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Responsibilities

The VDOE shall undertake the following activities during the duration of the MOU term:

1. Ensure adherence of NCPS to applicable federal and state laws and regulations and waiver guidelines.
2. Review and approve all documentation evidencing the school's and division's performance of requirements as set forth in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver for the VDOE as approved by USED, and monitor NCPS' compliance with the MOU.
3. Review and approve all documentation evidencing the division's performance of requirements as set forth in the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.
4. Assign an external VDOE contractor to NCPS for the purpose of building local capacity for supporting Lindenwood Elementary School. The contractor will:
 - a. Work with the Lead Turnaround Partner to provide technical assistance in core content areas, teacher evaluation, formative assessment and other areas to assist the principal and teachers as needed throughout the year.
 - b. Review the quarterly reports and provide feedback to the transformation team.
 - c. Monitor the implementation of the corrective action plan for Lindenwood Elementary School and ensure the school's and division's compliance to the MOU and SOA.

- d. Provide oversight to the academic review process with a focus on alignment of written, taught, and tested curricula in the four core content areas.

III. Norfolk City Public Schools Responsibilities and School Responsibilities

NCPS shall undertake the following activities during the duration of the MOU term:

1. Ensure adherence of applicable federal and state laws and regulations and waiver guidelines.
2. Provide reports to the Virginia Board of Education, as requested, on Lindenwood Elementary School’s progress in meeting a status of *Fully Accredited*.
3. Ensure NCPS division team is comprised of administrators or other key staff representing Title I, instruction, special education, English language learners (ELLs), and the principal of Lindenwood Elementary School, as appropriate.
4. Ensure division-level administrators establish and participate continuously in supporting school-level improvement efforts such as curricula alignment and monitor monthly the school improvement process. This includes support and monitoring of targeted interventions at the school level for students at risk for not passing a grade-level assessment including students with disabilities and ELLs.
5. Establish a school improvement team comprised of one division-level representative, the principal, and school-level leaders representing Title I, special education, and ELLs.
6. Use Indistar®, an online school improvement tool, to develop, coordinate, track, and report division- and school-level improvement activities, including the following:
 - a. School-level annual goals for student achievement on the State’s assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics;
 - b. Meeting minutes, professional development activities, strategies for extending learning opportunities, and parent activities as well as indicators of effective leadership and instructional practice at NCPS and school level;
 - c. Analysis of data points for quarterly reports to ensure strategic, data-driven decisions are made to deploy needed interventions for students who are not meeting expected growth measures and/or who are at risk of failure and dropping out of school; and
 - d. Tasks for the three required rapid improvement school indicators. These indicators meet the remedial requirements of 8-VAC 20-630 *Regulations for State Funded Remedial Programs* for schools rated *Accreditation Denied* or priority schools.

TA01	The school uses an identification process (including ongoing conversations with instructional leadership teams and data points to be used) for all students at risk of failing or in need of targeted interventions.
TA02	The school uses a tiered, differentiated intervention process to assign research-based interventions aligned with the individual needs of identified students (the process includes a description of how interventions are selected and assigned to students as well as the frequency and duration of interventions for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students).
TA03	The school uses a monitoring process (including a multidisciplinary team that meets regularly to review student intervention outcome data and identifies “triggers” and next steps for unsuccessful interventions) for targeted intervention students to ensure fidelity and effectiveness.

7. Follow all processes provided by VDOE to ensure that the written, taught and tested curricula are aligned.
8. Participate in division- or school-level technical assistance as recommended by the assigned VDOE contractor that will include strategies and assistance to align the written, taught and tested curricula.
9. Collaborate with assigned VDOE contractor(s) to ensure NCPS and the school maintain the fidelity of implementation necessary for reform.

IV. Modification and Termination

Any and all amendments to this agreement must be made in writing and must be agreed to and executed by all parties before becoming effective.

V. Effective Date and Signature

This MOU shall be effective upon the signature of the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) and the Norfolk City School Board (NCSB) officials. It shall be in force beginning on January 10, 2014, and will terminate when Lindenwood Elementary is *Fully Accredited* and is no longer a priority school. The VBOE and division indicate agreement with this MOU by their signatures.

Signatures and dates:

David Foster Virginia Board of Education President	Date
Dr. Patricia I. Wright Superintendent of Public Instruction	Date
Dr. Kirk T. Houston Norfolk City School Board Chairperson	Date
Dr. Samuel T. King Superintendent Norfolk City Public Schools	Date

Implementing the School Improvement Grant Transformation Model

Indicators that must be included in the corrective action plan:

Strand A: Establishing and Orienting the District Transformation Team

1. Appoint a district transformation team
2. Assess team and district capacity to support transformation
3. Provide team members with information on what districts can do to promote rapid improvement
4. Designate an internal lead partner for each transformation school

Strand B: Moving Toward School Autonomy

1. Examine current state and district policies and structures related to central control and make modifications to fully support transformation
2. Reorient district culture toward shared responsibility and accountability
3. Establish performance objectives for the school
4. Align resource allocation (money, time, human resources) with the school's instructional priorities
5. Consider establishing a turnaround office or zone (to also include transformations and other models)

Strand C: Selecting a Principal and Recruiting Teachers

1. Determine whether existing principal in position for two years or less has the necessary competencies to be a transformation leader
2. Advertise for candidates in local newspapers, publications such as *Education Week*, regional education newsletters or web sites; alternatively, engage a search firm
3. Screen candidates
4. Prepare to interview candidates
5. Interview candidates
6. Select and hire principal
7. Establish a pipeline of potential turnaround leaders
8. Recruit teachers to support the transformation

Strand D: Working with Stakeholders and Building Support for Transformation

1. Assign transformation team members the task of creating a plan to work and communicate with stakeholders prior to and during implementation of the transformation
2. Announce changes and anticipated actions publicly; communicate urgency of rapid improvement, and signal the need for rapid change
3. Engage parents and community
4. Build support for transformation
5. Establish a positive organizational culture
6. Help stakeholders overcome resistance to change
7. Persist and persevere, but discontinue failing strategies

Strand E: Contracting with External Providers

1. Identify potential providers
2. Write and issue request for proposals
3. Develop transparent selection criteria
4. Review proposals, conduct due diligence, and select provider(s)
5. Negotiate contract with provider, including goals, benchmarks, and plan to manage assets
6. Initiate ongoing cycle of continuous progress monitoring and adjustment
7. Prepare to proactively deal with problems and drop strategies that do not work
8. Plan for evaluation and clarify who is accountable for collecting data

Strand F: Establishing and Orienting the School Transformation Team

1. Appoint a school transformation team
2. Provide team members with information on what the school can do to promote rapid improvement

Strand G: Leading Change (Especially for Principals)

1. Become a change leader
2. Communicate the message of change
3. Collect and act on data
4. Seek quick wins
5. Provide optimum conditions for school turnaround team
6. Persist and persevere, but discontinue failing strategies

Strand H: Evaluating, Rewarding, and Removing Staff**a. Evaluating Staff**

1. Establish a system of procedures and protocols for recruiting, evaluating, rewarding, and replacing staff
2. Evaluate a range of teacher skills and knowledge, using a variety of valid and reliable tools
3. Include evaluation of student outcomes in teacher evaluation
4. Make the evaluation process transparent
5. Provide training to those conducting evaluations to ensure that they are conducted with fidelity to standardized procedures
6. Document the evaluation process
7. Provide timely, clear, constructive feedback to teachers
8. Link the evaluation process with the district's collective and individualized professional development programs
9. Assess the evaluation process periodically to gauge its quality and utility

b. Rewarding Staff

10. Create a system for making awards that is transparent and fair
11. Work with teachers and teachers' union at each stage of development and implementation
12. Implement a communication plan for building stakeholder support
13. Secure sufficient funding for long-term program sustainability
14. Provide performance-based incentives using valid data on whether performance indicators have been met
15. Use non-monetary incentives for performance

c. Removing Staff

16. Create several exit points for employees (e.g., voluntary departure of those unwilling, unable to meet new goals, address identified problems)
17. Set clear goals and measures for employees' performance that reflect the established evaluation system and provide targeted training or assistance for an employee receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation or warning

18. Reform tenure protections, seniority rights, and other job protections to enable quick performance-based dismissals
19. Negotiate expedited processes for performance-based dismissals in transformation schools
20. Form teams of specialists who are familiar with the rules and regulations that govern staff dismissals
21. Make teams available to help principals as they deal with underperforming employees to minimize principal's time spent dismissing low performers
22. Facilitate swift exits to minimize further damage caused by underperforming employees

Strand I: Providing Rigorous Staff Development

1. Provide professional development that is appropriate for individual teachers with different experience and expertise
2. Offer an induction program to support new teachers in their first years of teaching
3. Align professional development with identified needs based on staff evaluation and student performance
4. Provide all staff high quality, ongoing, job-embedded, and differentiated professional development
5. Structure professional development to provide adequate time for collaboration and active learning
6. Provide sustained and embedded professional development related to implementation of new programs and strategies
7. Set goals for professional development and monitor the extent to which it has changed practice
8. Ensure that school leaders act as instructional leaders, providing regular feedback to teachers to help them improve their practice
9. Directly align professional development with classroom observations (including peer observations) to build specific skills and knowledge of teachers
10. Create a professional learning community that fosters a school culture of continuous learning
11. Promote a school culture in which professional collaboration is valued and emphasized

Strand J: Increasing Learning Time

1. Become familiar with research and best practices associated with efforts to increase learning time
2. Assess areas of need, select programs/strategies to be implemented and identify potential community partners
3. Create enthusiasm for extended learning programs and strategies among parents, teachers, students, civic leaders and faith-based organizations through information sharing, collaborative planning, and regular communication
4. Allocate funds to support extended learning time, including innovative partnerships
5. Assist school leaders in networking with potential partners and in developing partnerships
6. Create and sustain partnerships to support extended learning
7. Ensure that teachers use extra time effectively when extended learning is implemented within the regular school program by providing targeted professional development
8. Monitor progress of the extended learning time programs and strategies being implemented, using data to inform modifications

Strand K: Reforming Instruction

1. Establish a team structure among teachers with specific duties and time for instructional planning
2. Focus principal's role on building leadership capacity, achieving learning goals, and improving instruction
3. Align professional development with classroom observations and teacher evaluation criteria
4. Ensure that teachers align instruction with standards and benchmarks
5. Monitor and assess student mastery of standards-based objectives in order to make appropriate curriculum adjustments
6. Differentiate and align learning activities
7. Assess student learning frequently using standards-based classroom assessments
8. Prepare standards-aligned lessons and differentiated activities
9. Provide sound instruction in a variety of modes: teacher-directed whole-class; teacher-directed small-group; student-directed small group; independent work; computer-based; homework
10. Demonstrate sound homework practices and communication with parents
11. Employ effective classroom management