

Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item



Agenda Item: D

Date: April 28, 2016

Title	Final Review of Proposed Revisions to the <i>Procedure for Adjusting Grievances</i> , 8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq. (Final Stage)		
Presenter	Mrs. Patty S. Pitts, Assistant Superintendent for Teacher Education and Licensure		
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Purpose of Presentation:

Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

Previous Review or Action:

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

Date: May 23, 2013

Action: First Review of Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) to Revise the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* (8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq.)

Date: June 27, 2013

Action: Final Review of Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) to Revise the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* (8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq.)

Date: January 16, 2014

Action: First Review of Proposed Revisions the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, 8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq. (Proposed Stage)

Date: February 27, 2014

Action: Final Review of Proposed Revisions to the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, 8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq. (Proposed Stage)

Date: March 17, 2016

Action: First Review of Proposed Revisions to the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, 8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq. (Final Stage)

Action Requested:

Final review: Action requested at this meeting.

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

	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
X	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 5: The *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* provides (1) an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of local school board policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of teachers, other than dismissals and (2) an orderly procedure for the expeditious resolution of disputes involving the dismissal of any teacher.

The 2013 Virginia General Assembly approved House Bill [2151](#) and Senate Bill [1223](#) to amend and re-enact §§ [2.2-507](#), [22.1-79](#), [22.1-253.13:5](#), [22.1-293](#), [22.1-294](#), [22.1-295](#), [22.1-298.1](#), [22.1-299](#), [22.1-302](#), [22.1-303](#), [22.1-304](#), [22.1-305](#), [22.1-305.1](#), [22.1-306](#), [22.1-307](#), [22.1-309](#), [22.1-311](#), [22.1-313](#), and [22.1-314](#) of the *Code of Virginia* and to repeal §§ [22.1-299.3](#), [22.1-310](#), and [22.1-312](#) of the *Code of Virginia*. Senate Bill [2151](#) bill is identical to [1223](#).

§ [2.2-507](#). Legal service in civil matters.

A. All legal service in civil matters for the Commonwealth, the Governor, and every state department, institution, division, commission, board, bureau, agency, entity, official, court, or judge, including the conduct of all civil litigation in which any of them are interested, shall be rendered and performed by the Attorney General, except as provided in this chapter and except for any litigation concerning a justice or judge initiated by the Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission. No regular counsel shall be employed for or by the Governor or any state department, institution, division, commission, board, bureau, agency, entity, or official. The Attorney General may represent personally or through one or more of his assistants any number of state departments, institutions, divisions, commissions, boards, bureaus, agencies, entities, officials, courts, or judges that are parties to the same transaction or that are parties in the same civil or administrative proceeding and may represent multiple interests within the same department, institution, division, commission, board, bureau, agency, or entity. The soil and water conservation district directors or districts may request legal advice from local, public, or private sources; however, upon request of the soil and water conservation district directors or districts, the Attorney General shall provide legal service in civil matters for such district directors or districts.

B. The Attorney General may represent personally or through one of his assistants any of the following persons who are made defendant in any civil action for damages arising out of any matter connected with their official duties:

1. Members, agents or employees of the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board;
2. Agents inspecting or investigators appointed by the State Corporation Commission;
3. Agents, investigators, or auditors employed by the Department of Taxation;
4. Members, agents or employees of the State Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the State Board of Health, the State Department of Health, the Department of General Services, the State Board of Social Services, the Department of Social Services, the State Board of Corrections, the Department of Corrections, the State Board of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Virginia Parole Board, or the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;
5. Persons employed by the Commonwealth Transportation Board;

6. Persons employed by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles;
7. Persons appointed by the Commissioner of Marine Resources;
8. Police officers appointed by the Superintendent of State Police;
9. Conservation police officers appointed by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries;
10. ~~Third impartial panel members~~ *Hearing officers* appointed to hear a teacher's grievance pursuant to § [22.1-312](#) [22.1-311](#);
11. Staff members or volunteers participating in a court-appointed special advocate program pursuant to Article 5 (§ [9.1-151](#) et seq.) of Chapter 1 of Title 9.1;
12. Any emergency medical service agency that is a licensee of the Department of Health in any civil matter and any guardian ad litem appointed by a court in a civil matter brought against him for alleged errors or omissions in the discharge of his court-appointed duties;
13. Conservation officers of the Department of Conservation and Recreation; or
14. A person appointed by written order of a circuit court judge to run an existing corporation or company as the judge's representative, when that person is acting in execution of a lawful order of the court and the order specifically refers to this section and appoints such person to serve as an agent of the Commonwealth.

Upon request of the affected individual, the Attorney General may represent personally or through one of his assistants any basic or advanced emergency medical care attendant or technician possessing a valid certificate issued by authority of the State Board of Health in any civil matter in which a defense of immunity from liability is raised pursuant to § [8.01-225](#).

C. If, in the opinion of the Attorney General, it is impracticable or uneconomical for such legal service to be rendered by him or one of his assistants, he may employ special counsel for this purpose, whose compensation shall be fixed by the Attorney General. The compensation for such special counsel shall be paid out of the funds appropriated for the administration of the board, commission, division or department being represented or whose members, officers, inspectors, investigators, or other employees are being represented pursuant to this section. Notwithstanding any provision of this section to the contrary, the Supreme Court may employ its own counsel in any matter arising out of its official duties in which it, or any justice, is a party.

§ [22.1-79](#). Powers and duties.

A school board shall:

1. See that the school laws are properly explained, enforced and observed;
2. Secure, by visitation or otherwise, as full information as possible about the conduct of the public schools in the school division and take care that they are conducted according to law and with the utmost efficiency;

3. Care for, manage and control the property of the school division and provide for the erecting, furnishing, equipping, and noninstructional operating of necessary school buildings and appurtenances and the maintenance thereof by purchase, lease, or other contracts;
4. Provide for the consolidation of schools or redistricting of school boundaries or adopt pupil assignment plans whenever such procedure will contribute to the efficiency of the school division;
5. Insofar as not inconsistent with state statutes and regulations of the Board of Education, operate and maintain the public schools in the school division and determine the length of the school term, the studies to be pursued, the methods of teaching and the government to be employed in the schools;
6. In instances in which no grievance procedure has been adopted prior to January 1, 1991, establish and administer by July 1, 1992, a grievance procedure for all school board employees, except the division superintendent and those employees covered under the provisions of Article 2 (§ [22.1-293](#) et seq.) and Article 3 (§ [22.1-306](#) et seq.) of Chapter 15 of this title, who have completed such probationary period as may be required by the school board, not to exceed 18 months. The grievance procedure shall afford a timely and fair method of the resolution of disputes arising between the school board and such employees regarding dismissal or other disciplinary actions, excluding suspensions, and shall be consistent with the provisions of the Board of Education's procedures for adjusting grievances, ~~except that there shall be no right to a hearing before a fact-finding panel.~~ Except in the case of dismissal, suspension, or other disciplinary action, the grievance procedure prescribed by the Board of Education pursuant to § [22.1-308](#) shall apply to all full-time employees of a school board, except supervisory employees;
7. Perform such other duties as shall be prescribed by the Board of Education or as are imposed by law;
8. Obtain public comment through a public hearing not less than 10 days after reasonable notice to the public in a newspaper of general circulation in the school division prior to providing (i) for the consolidation of schools; (ii) the transfer from the public school system of the administration of all instructional services for any public school classroom or all noninstructional services in the school division pursuant to a contract with any private entity or organization; or (iii) in school divisions having 15,000 pupils or more in average daily membership, for redistricting of school boundaries or adopting any pupil assignment plan affecting the assignment of 15 percent or more of the pupils in average daily membership in the affected school. Such public hearing may be held at the same time and place as the meeting of the school board at which the proposed action is taken if the public hearing is held before the action is taken. If a public hearing has been held prior to the effective date of this provision on a proposed consolidation, redistricting or pupil assignment plan which is to be implemented after the effective date of this provision, an additional public hearing shall not be required;
9. (Expires July 1, 2015) At least annually, survey the school division to identify critical shortages of teachers and administrative personnel by subject matter, and report such critical shortages to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and to the Virginia Retirement System; however, the school board may request the division superintendent to conduct such survey and submit such report to the school board, the Superintendent, and the Virginia Retirement System; and
10. Ensure that the public schools within the school division are registered with the Department of State Police to receive from the State Police electronic notice of the registration or reregistration of any sex offender within that school division pursuant to § [9.1-914](#).

§ [22.1-305](#). Nonrenewal of contract of probationary teacher.

A. Before a division superintendent recommends to the school board nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status, the division superintendent shall consider, among other things, the performance evaluations for such teacher required by § [22.1-303](#) and shall notify the teacher of the proposed recommendation. Upon written request of the teacher within five working days after receipt of such notice, the division superintendent or his designee shall orally provide the specific reasons, if any, for such recommendation, along with supporting documentation, including such performance evaluations, to the teacher and, if requested by the teacher, to his or her representative. Within ~~ten~~ 10 days after receiving such reasons, the teacher may request, by notification in writing to the division superintendent, a conference before the division superintendent. Upon such request, the division superintendent shall set a date for the conference, which shall be within ~~thirty~~ 30 days of the request, and shall give the teacher at least ~~fifteen~~ 15 days' notice of the time and place of the conference.

B. The conference shall be before the division superintendent or his designee. No such designee shall have recommended to the division superintendent the nonrenewal of the teacher's contract. The teacher and the person or persons who recommended the nonrenewal of the teacher's contract to the division superintendent, or a representative of either or both, shall be allowed to participate in the conference, but no such representative shall be an attorney.

C. If the conference is before a designee of the division superintendent, the designee shall communicate his recommendations to the division superintendent and to the teacher.

D. The division superintendent shall notify the teacher, in writing, of his intention with respect to the recommendation within ~~ten~~ 10 days after the conference.

E. In any case in which a teacher requests a conference *reasons for the recommendation* as provided in this section, written notice of nonrenewal of the contract by the school board must be given *either within 10 days after the time for requesting a conference has expired and the teacher has not made a timely request for a conference or, if a conference is requested, within* ~~thirty~~ 30 days after the division superintendent notifies the teacher of his intention with respect to the recommendation and the provisions of § [22.1-304](#) requiring such notice on or before ~~April~~ June 15 shall not be applicable.

F. The conference shall be confidential and no written or oral communication of such conference shall be made to anyone other than the school board, in executive session, and employees of the school division having an interest therein; however, both the teacher and the division superintendent, upon request, may provide the reasons for the nonrenewal to a potential employer of the teacher.

G. The provisions of this section shall be inapplicable when a decrease in enrollment or the abolition of a particular subject or reduction in the number of classes offered in a particular subject causes a reduction in the number of teachers; however, a statement to that effect shall be placed in the personnel file of each teacher whose contract is nonrenewed for any such reason.

H. The intent of this section is to provide an opportunity for a probationary teacher to discuss the reasons for nonrenewal with the division superintendent or his designee, and the provisions of this section are meant to be procedural only. Nothing contained herein shall be taken to require cause, as defined in § [22.1-307](#), for the nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing

contract status nor shall the failure of the school board or the division superintendent to comply with any time requirement herein constitute a basis for continued employment of the teacher.

§ [22.1-306](#). Definitions.

As used in this article:

"Business day" means any day that the relevant school board office is open.

"Day" means calendar days unless a different meaning is clearly expressed in this article. Whenever the last day for performing an act required by this article falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the act may be performed on the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

"Dismissal" means the dismissal of any teacher during the term of such teacher's contract.

"Grievance" means a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to his ~~or her~~ employment, including, but not necessarily limited to: (i) disciplinary action including dismissal ~~or placing on probation~~; (ii) the application or interpretation of: (a) personnel policies, (b) procedures, (c) rules and regulations, (d) ordinances, and (e) statutes; (iii) acts of reprisal against a teacher for filing or processing a grievance, participating as a witness in any step, meeting or hearing relating to a grievance, or serving as a member of a fact-finding panel; and (iv) complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, political affiliation, handicap, age, national origin, or sex. Each school board shall have the exclusive right to manage the affairs and operations of the school division. Accordingly, the term "grievance" shall not include a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to ~~(i)~~ (1) establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classifications or general benefits, ~~(ii)~~ (2) suspension of a teacher or nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status, ~~(iii)~~ (3) the establishment or contents of ordinances, statutes or personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations, ~~(iv)~~ (4) failure to promote, ~~(v)~~ (5) discharge, layoff, or suspension from duties because of decrease in enrollment, decrease in enrollment or abolition of a particular subject or insufficient funding, ~~(vi)~~ (6) hiring, transfer, assignment, and retention of teachers within the school division, ~~(vii)~~ (7) suspension from duties in emergencies, ~~or (viii)~~ (8) the methods, means, and personnel by which the school division's operations are to be carried on, or (9) coaching or extracurricular activity sponsorship.

While these management rights are reserved to the school board, failure to apply, where applicable, the rules, regulations, policies, or procedures as written or established by the school board is grievable.

~~"Dismissal" means the dismissal of any teacher during the term of such teacher's contract and the nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher on continuing contract.~~

§ [22.1-307](#). Dismissal of teacher; grounds.

A. Teachers may be dismissed ~~or placed on probation~~ for incompetency, immorality, noncompliance with school laws and regulations, disability as shown by competent medical evidence when in compliance with federal law, conviction of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude, or other good and just cause. A teacher shall be dismissed if such teacher is or becomes the subject of a founded complaint of child abuse and neglect, pursuant to § [63.2-1505](#), and after all rights to an appeal provided by § [63.2-1526](#) have been exhausted. The fact of such finding, after all rights to an appeal provided by § [63.2-1526](#) have been exhausted, shall be grounds for the local school division to recommend that the

Board of Education revoke such person's license to teach. No teacher shall be dismissed or placed on probation solely on the basis of the teacher's refusal to submit to a polygraph examination requested by the school board.

B. For the purposes of this article, "incompetency" may be construed to include, but shall not be limited to, consistent failure to meet the endorsement requirements for the position or ~~performance that is documented through evaluation to be consistently less than satisfactory~~ *one or more unsatisfactory performance evaluations.*

§ [22.1-309](#). Notice to teacher of recommendation of dismissal; school board not to consider merits during notice; superintendent required to provide reasons for recommendation upon request.

In the event a division superintendent determines to recommend dismissal of any teacher ~~or the placing on probation of a teacher on continuing contract~~, written notice shall be sent to the teacher notifying him of the proposed dismissal ~~or placing on probation~~ and informing him that within ~~fifteen~~ *five business* days after receiving the notice the teacher may request a hearing before the school board *or, at the option of the local school board, a hearing officer appointed by the school board* as provided in § [22.1-311](#) ~~or before a fact-finding panel as provided in § 22.1-312~~. During such ~~fifteen-day~~ *five business day* period and thereafter until a hearing is held in accordance with the provisions ~~herein~~ *of this section*, if one is requested by the teacher, the merits of the recommendation of the division superintendent shall not be considered, discussed or acted upon by the school board except as provided for ~~herein~~ *in this section*. At the request of the teacher, the division superintendent shall provide the reasons for the recommendation in writing or, if the teacher prefers, in a personal interview. In the event a teacher requests a hearing pursuant to § [22.1-311](#) ~~or § 22.1-312~~, the division superintendent shall provide, within ~~ten~~ *10* days of the request, the teacher or his representative with the opportunity to inspect and copy his personnel file and all other documents relied upon in reaching the decision to recommend dismissal ~~or probation~~. Within ~~ten~~ *10* days of the request of the division superintendent, the teacher or his representative shall provide the division superintendent with the opportunity to inspect and copy the documents to be offered in rebuttal to the decision to recommend dismissal ~~or probation~~. The division superintendent and the teacher or his representative shall be under a continuing duty to disclose and produce any additional documents identified later which may be used in the respective parties' cases-in-chief. The cost of copying such documents shall be paid by the requesting party.

For the purposes of this section, "personnel file" ~~shall mean~~ *means* any and all memoranda, entries, or other documents included in the teacher's file as maintained in the central school administration office or in any file on the teacher maintained within a school in which the teacher serves.

§ [22.1-311](#). Hearing before school board or hearing officer.

A. ~~Upon a timely request for a hearing pursuant to § 22.1-309, the school board or, at the option of the school board, a hearing officer appointed by the school board shall set a hearing within 15 days of the request and the teacher shall be given at least five days' written notice of the time and the place. The hearing before the school board, which shall be private unless the teacher requests a public one, must be set within 30 days of the request, and the teacher must be given at least 15 days' written notice of the time and place the hearing to be public. At the hearing the teacher may appear with or without a representative and be heard, presenting testimony of witnesses and other evidence. The school board may hear a recommendation for dismissal and make a determination whether to make a recommendation~~

to the Board of Education regarding the teacher's license at the same hearing or hold a separate hearing for each action.

B. Each school board may appoint an impartial hearing officer from outside the school division to conduct hearings pursuant to this section. A hearing officer shall not have been involved in the recommendation of dismissal as a witness or a representative. A hearing officer shall possess some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law and be capable of presiding over an administrative hearing. The hearing officer shall schedule and preside over such hearings and shall create a record or recording of such proceedings. The hearing officer shall make a written recommendation to the school board, a copy of which shall be provided to the teacher. The hearing officer shall transmit the recommendation and the record or recording of the hearing to the school board as soon as practicable and no more than 10 business days after the hearing. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer, the school board may make its decision upon the record or recording of such hearing, pursuant to § [22.1-313](#), or the school board may elect to conduct a further hearing to receive additional evidence by giving written notice of the time and place to the teacher and the division superintendent within 10 business days after the board receives the record or recording of the initial hearing. Such notice shall also specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board.

C. A record or recording of any hearing conducted pursuant to this section shall be made. The parties shall share the cost of the recording equally. In proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal, the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. In such proceedings, if the recording is not dispensed with, the two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally; if either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation. In cases of dismissal, the record or recording shall be preserved for a period of six months. If the school board requests that a transcript be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the cost of the transcription.

D. Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.

§ [22.1-313](#). Decision of school board; generally.

A. The school board shall retain its exclusive final authority over matters concerning employment and supervision of its personnel, including dismissals; ~~and suspensions and placing on probation.~~

~~B. In the case of a hearing before the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision within as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after the hearing. A record of the proceedings shall be taken and made available as provided in subsection I of § [22.1-312](#). Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.~~

~~C. In the case of a hearing before a fact-finding panel hearing officer appointed by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision within as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after the school board receives both the transcript of such hearing, if any, and the panel's findings of fact and recommendations receiving the record or recording of the hearing; however, should there be a further hearing before the school board, as hereafter provided, such decision shall be furnished the teacher within as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after such further hearing. The~~

decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the transcript, if any, and the findings of fact and recommendations of the panel and such further evidence as the school board may receive at any further hearing.

~~C-D.~~ A teacher may be dismissed; *or* suspended *or* placed on probation by a majority of a quorum of the school board. ~~In the event the school board's decision is at variance with the recommendations of the fact finding panel,~~ the school board shall be required to conduct an additional hearing which shall be public unless the teacher requests a private one. However, if the fact finding hearing was held in private, the additional hearing shall be held in private. The hearing shall be conducted by the school board pursuant to subsection D of this section, ~~except that the grievant and the division superintendent shall be allowed to appear, to be represented, and to give testimony.~~ However, the additional hearing shall not include examination and cross-examination of any other witnesses. The school board's written decision shall include the rationale for the decision.

~~D.~~ In any case in which a further hearing by a school board is held after a hearing before a fact finding panel, the school board shall consider at such further hearing the transcript, if any, the findings and recommendations of the fact finding panel and such further evidence, including that of witnesses having testified before the panel, as the school board deems appropriate or as may be offered on behalf of the grievant or the respondent. A school board may initiate any such hearing upon written notice to the teacher and the division superintendent within 10 business days after the board receives the findings of fact and recommendations of the panel and any transcript of any panel hearing. Such notice shall specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board. In any case in which a teacher may initiate any such hearing, the teacher shall request such hearing in writing within 10 business days after receiving the findings of fact and recommendations of the panel and any transcript of the panel hearing. Any decision by the school board shall be based solely on the transcript, if any, the findings of fact and recommendations of the panel, and any evidence relevant to the issues of the original grievance adduced at the hearing in the presence of each party. Such hearing shall be conducted as a hearing by the school board as provided in § [22.1-311](#).

E. The school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he or they represented a participant in the prior proceedings, the grievant, the grievant's attorney or representative, and, notwithstanding the provisions of § [22.1-69](#), the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board which has as its purpose reaching a decision on a grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative and the superintendent may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.

F. In those instances when licensed personnel are dismissed or resign due to a conviction of any felony, any offense involving the sexual molestation, physical or sexual abuse or rape of a child, any offense involving drugs, or due to having become the subject of a founded case of child abuse or neglect, the local school board shall notify the Board of Education within 10 business days of such dismissal or the acceptance of such resignation.

§ [22.1-314](#). Decision of school board; issue of grievability; appeal.

Decisions regarding whether or not a matter is grievable shall be made by the school board at the request of the school division administration or grievant and such decision shall be made within 10 business days of such request. The school board shall reach its decision only after allowing the school division

administration and the grievant opportunity to present written or oral arguments regarding grievability. The decision as to whether the arguments shall be written or oral shall be in the discretion of the school board. Decisions of the school board may be appealed to the circuit court having jurisdiction in the school division for a hearing on the issue of grievability.

Proceedings for review of the decision of the school board shall be instituted by filing a notice of appeal with the school board within 10 business days after the date of the decision and giving a copy thereof to all other parties. Within 10 business days thereafter, the school board shall transmit to the clerk of the court to which the appeal is taken a copy of its decision, a copy of the notice of appeal, and the exhibits. The failure of the school board to transmit the record within the time allowed shall not prejudice the rights of the grievant. The court, on motion of the grievant, may issue a writ of certiorari requiring the school board to transmit the record on or before a certain date. Within 10 business days of receipt by the clerk of such record, the court, sitting without a jury, shall hear the appeal on the record transmitted by the school board and such additional evidence as may be necessary to resolve any controversy as to the correctness of the record. The court, in its discretion, may receive such other evidence as the ends of justice require. The court may affirm the decision of the school board or may reverse or modify the decision. The decision of the court shall be rendered no later than the fifteenth day from the date of the conclusion of the hearing. Such determination of grievability shall be made subsequent to the reduction of the grievance to writing but prior to any ~~panel or school board~~ hearing or the right to such determination shall be deemed to have been waived.

The 2014 Virginia General Assembly approved House Bill [977](#) and Senate Bill [43](#) to amend and re-enact § [22.1-309](#) of the Code of Virginia.

§ [22.1-309](#). Notice to teacher of recommendation of dismissal; school board not to consider merits during notice; superintendent required to provide reasons for recommendation upon request.

In the event a division superintendent determines to recommend dismissal of any teacher, written notice shall be sent to the teacher notifying him of the proposed dismissal and informing him that within ~~five~~ 10 business days after receiving the notice the teacher may request a hearing before the school board or, at the option of the local school board, a hearing officer appointed by the school board as provided in § [22.1-311](#). During such ~~five business day~~ 10-business-day period and thereafter until a hearing is held in accordance with the provisions of this section, if one is requested by the teacher, the merits of the recommendation of the division superintendent shall not be considered, discussed or acted upon by the school board except as provided for in this section. At the request of the teacher, the division superintendent shall provide the reasons for the recommendation in writing or, if the teacher prefers, in a personal interview. In the event a teacher requests a hearing pursuant to § [22.1-311](#), the division superintendent shall provide, within 10 days of the request, the teacher or his representative with the opportunity to inspect and copy his personnel file and all other documents relied upon in reaching the decision to recommend dismissal. Within 10 days of the request of the division superintendent, the teacher or his representative shall provide the division superintendent with the opportunity to inspect and copy the documents to be offered in rebuttal to the decision to recommend dismissal. The division superintendent and the teacher or his representative shall be under a continuing duty to disclose and produce any additional documents identified later which may be used in the respective parties' cases-in-chief. The cost of copying such documents shall be paid by the requesting party.

For the purposes of this section, "personnel file" means any and all memoranda, entries, or other documents included in the teacher's file as maintained in the central school administration office or in any file on the teacher maintained within a school in which the teacher serves.

The *Constitution of Virginia* grants the Board of Education authority for the general supervision of the public school system, and Section 22.1-16 of the *Code of Virginia* authorizes the Board to promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out its powers and duties and the provisions of this title.

Constitution of Virginia ([Article VIII, Section 4](#)):

“The general supervision of the public school system shall be vested in a Board of Education....”

Code of Virginia, Section [22.1-16](#). Bylaws and regulations generally.

The Board of Education may adopt bylaws for its own government and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out its powers and duties and the provisions of this title.

On June 27, 2013, the Board of Education approved the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA), which is required for executive branch review and the Virginia Registrar of Regulations, pursuant to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA) and Executive Order 14 (2010). The NOIRA was filed with the Virginia Registrar.

The Board of Education approved the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* (Proposed Stage) on February 27, 2014. A public hearing was held on January 28, 2016. No public comment was received.

Summary of Important Issues:

The Virginia Board of Education regulations, *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, were last amended effective May 2, 2005. The 2013 and 2014 General Assembly approved legislation resulting in the need to make revisions to the regulations. Other than changing the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* to comport with the 2013 and 2014 legislation, no additional substantive revisions were made. The major revisions to the regulations are as follows:

- Changes the grievance procedure for teachers by giving local school boards the option to assign a grievance hearing to be heard by an impartial hearing officer designated by the local school board;
- Removes the option for a grievance to be heard before a fact-finding panel;
- Removes “placing on probation” from the definition of a Grievance; and
- Revises the Board of Education forms prescribed by the *Code of Virginia*.

Attached are proposed revisions to the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* (Final Stage). There were no proposed revisions between the proposed and final stages. Attached is the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall Final Regulation Agency Background Document.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

The administrative impact required in promulgating these regulations will be absorbed within existing resources.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

After Board approval, the regulations will continue through the procedures of the Administrative Process Act. The Department of Education will notify school divisions of the revisions to the regulations when they become final, pursuant to the requirements of the Administrative Process Act.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the proposed revisions to the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, 8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq. (Final Stage) and authorize the Department of Education to make technical edits.

Rationale:

The Board of Education *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* must be revised to conform to the *Code of Virginia*.

ATTACHMENTS

PROPOSED PROCEDURE FOR ADJUSTING GRIEVANCES

FINAL REGULATION AGENCY BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

Project 3790 - Proposed

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Revise the Procedure for Adjusting Grievances

Part I

Definitions

8VAC20-90-10. Definitions.

The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

"Business day" means, ~~in accordance with § 22.1-312 of the Code of Virginia,~~ any day that the relevant school board office is open.

"Days" means calendar days unless a different meaning is clearly expressed in this procedure. ~~Whenever any period of time fixed by this procedure shall expire~~ the last day for performing an act required by this procedure falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, ~~the period of time for taking action under this procedure shall be extended to the~~ act may be performed on the next day ~~if it~~ that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

"Dismissal" means the dismissal of any teacher within the term of such teacher's contract ~~and the nonrenewal of a contract of a teacher on a continuing contract.~~

"Grievance" means, for the purpose of Part II (8VAC20-90-20 et seq.), a complaint or a dispute by a teacher relating to his employment, including but not necessarily limited to the application or interpretation of personnel policies, rules and regulations, ordinances, and statutes; acts of reprisal ~~as a result~~ against a teacher for filing or processing a grievance, or participating as a witness in any step, meeting, or hearing related to a grievance; or complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, political affiliation, handicap, age, national

origin, or sex. "Grievance" means, for the purposes of Part III (8VAC20-90-60 et seq.), a complaint or a dispute involving a teacher relating to his employment involving dismissal ~~or placing on probation~~. The term "grievance" shall not include a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to the establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classifications or general benefits; suspension of a teacher or nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status; the establishment or contents of ordinances, statutes or personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations; failure to promote; ~~or discharge, layoff, or suspension from duties because of decrease in enrollment, decrease in a particular subject, enrollment in or~~ abolition of a particular subject, or insufficient funding; hiring, transfer, assignment and retention of teachers within the school division; suspension from duties ~~in emergencies; or~~ the methods, means and personnel by which the school division's operations are to be carried on; or coaching or extracurricular activity sponsorship. While these management rights are reserved to the school board, failure to apply, where applicable, these rules, regulations, policies, or procedures as written or established by the school board is grievable.

"Hearing officer" means an impartial hearing officer from outside the school division who possesses some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law and who is capable of presiding over an administrative hearing.

"Personnel file" means, for the purposes of Part III (8VAC20-90-60 et seq.), any and all memoranda, entries or other documents included in the teacher's file as maintained in the central school administration office or in any file regarding the teacher maintained within a school in which the teacher serves.

~~"Probation" means a period not to exceed one year during which time it shall be the duty of the teacher to remedy those deficiencies which give rise to the probationary status.~~

"Teacher" or "teachers" means, for the purposes of Part II (8VAC20-90-20 et seq.), all employees of the school division involved in classroom instruction and all other full-time employees of the school division except those employees classified as supervising employees. "Teacher" means, for the purposes of Part III (8VAC20-90-60 et seq.), all regularly ~~certified~~ licensed professional public school personnel employed by any school division under a written contract as provided by § 22.1-302 of the Code of Virginia, ~~by any school division~~ as a teacher or as an assistant principal, principal, or supervisor of classroom teachers but ~~excluding all superintendents~~ as provided by § 22.1-294 of the Code of Virginia.

"Shall file," "shall respond in writing," or "shall serve written notice" means the document is either delivered personally ~~to the grievant or office of the proper school board representative~~ or is mailed by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and postmarked within the time limits prescribed by this procedure to the grievant or office of the proper school board representative.

"Supervisory employee" means any person having authority in the interest of the board (i) to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees; and (ii) to direct other employees; or (iii) to adjust the grievance of other employees; or (iv) to recommend any action set forth in clause (i), (ii), or (iii) above; provided that the authority to act as set forth in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) requires the exercise of independent judgment and is not merely routine and clerical in nature.

"Written grievance appeal" means a written or typed statement describing the event or action complained of, ~~or~~ the date of the event or action complained of, and a concise description of those policies, ~~procedures~~ rules, regulations, ~~ordinances~~ or statutes upon which the teacher bases his claim. The grievant shall specify what he expects to obtain through use of the grievance procedure. A ~~statement~~ written grievance appeal shall be ~~written upon~~ on forms prescribed by the Board of Education and supplied by the local school board.

Part II

Grievance Procedure

8VAC20-90-20. Purpose of Part II of this grievance procedure.

The purpose of Part II of the Procedure for Adjusting Grievances is to provide an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of local school board policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of teachers, other than dismissals or ~~probation~~. An equitable solution of grievances should be secured at the most immediate administrative level. The procedure should not be construed as limiting the right of any teacher to discuss any matter of concern with any member of the school administration, nor should the procedure be construed to restrict any teacher's right to seek, or the school division administration's right to provide, review of complaints that are not included within the definition of a grievance. Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted to limit a school board's exclusive final authority over the management and operation of the school division.

8VAC20-90-30. Grievance procedure.

Recognizing that grievances should ~~be begun~~ begin and should be settled promptly, a grievance must be initiated within 15 business days following either the event giving rise to the grievance, or within 15 business days following the time when the employee knew or reasonably should have known of its occurrence. Grievances shall be processed as follows:

1. Step 1 -- Informal. The first step shall be an informal conference between the teacher and his immediate supervisor (which may be the principal). The teacher shall state the nature of the grievance, and the immediate supervisor shall attempt to adjust the grievance. It is mandatory that the teacher present the grievance informally prior to proceeding to Step 2.

2. Step 2 -- Principal. If for any reason the grievance is not resolved informally in Step 1 to the satisfaction of the teacher, the teacher must perfect his grievance by filing ~~said grievance in writing~~ a written grievance appeal on the required form within 15 business days following the event giving rise to the grievance, or within 15 business days following the time when the employee knew or reasonably should have known of its occurrence, specifying on the form the specific relief expected. Regardless of the outcome of Step 1, if a written grievance appeal is not, without just cause, filed within the specified time, the grievance will be barred.

A meeting shall be held between the principal (or his designee or both) and the teacher (or his designee or both) within five business days of the receipt by the principal of the written grievance. At such meeting the teacher or other party involved, or both, shall be entitled to present appropriate witnesses and to be accompanied by a representative other than an attorney. The principal (or his designee or both) shall respond in writing within five business days following such meeting.

The principal may forward to the teacher within five days from the receipt of the written grievance a written request for more specific information regarding the grievance. The teacher shall file an answer thereto within 10 business days, and the meeting must then be held within five business days thereafter.

3. Step 3 -- Superintendent. If the grievance is not settled to the teacher's satisfaction in Step 2, the teacher can proceed to Step 3 by filing a written notice of appeal with the superintendent, accompanied by the original written grievance appeal form within five business days after receipt of the Step 2 answer (or the due date of such answer). A meeting shall then be held between the superintendent (or his designee or both) and the teacher (or his designee or both) at a mutually agreeable time within five business days. The superintendent or designee may make a written request for more specific

information from the teacher, but only if such information was not requested in Step 2.
The teacher shall file an answer to such request within 10 business days, and the meeting shall be held within five business days of the date on which the answer was received. At such meeting both the superintendent and the teacher shall be entitled to present witnesses and to be accompanied by a representative who may be an attorney. A representative may examine, cross-examine, question, and present evidence on behalf of a grievant or the superintendent without violating the provisions of § 54.1-3904 of the Code of Virginia. If no settlement can be reached in said meeting, the superintendent (or his designee) shall respond in writing within five business days following such meeting. ~~The superintendent or designee may make a written request for more specific information from the teacher, but only if such was not requested in Step 2. Such request shall be answered within 10 business days, and the meeting shall be held within five business days of the date on which the answer was received.~~ If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the teacher in Step 3, the teacher may ~~elect to have a hearing by a fact-finding panel, as provided in Step 4, or after giving proper notice may request a decision by the school board pursuant to Step 5~~ 4.

~~4. Step 4 -- Fact-finding panel. In the event the grievance is not settled upon completion of Step 3, either the teacher or the school board may elect to have a hearing by a fact-finding panel prior to a decision by the school board, as provided in Step 4. If the teacher elects to proceed to Step 4, he must notify the superintendent in writing of the intention to request a fact-finding panel and enclose a copy of the original grievance form within five business days after receipt of a Step 3 answer (or the due date of such answer). If the school board elects to proceed to a fact-finding panel, the superintendent must serve written notice of the board's intention upon the grievant within 15 business days after the answer provided by Step 3.~~

~~a. Panel. Within five business days after the receipt by the division superintendent of the request for a fact-finding panel, the teacher and the division superintendent shall each select one panel member from among the employees of the school division other than an individual involved in any previous phase of the grievance procedure as a supervisor, witness, or representative. The two panel members so selected shall within five business days of their selection select a third impartial panel member.~~

~~b. Selection of impartial third member. In the event that both panel members are unable to agree upon a third panel member within five business days, both members of the panel shall request the chief judge of the circuit court having jurisdiction of the school division to furnish a list of five qualified and impartial individuals from which one individual shall be selected by the two members of the panel to serve as the third member. The individuals named by the chief judge may reside either within or outside the jurisdiction of the circuit court, be residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and in all cases shall possess some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law and shall be deemed by the judge capable of presiding over an administrative hearing. Within five business days after receipt by the two panel members of the list of fact finders nominated by the chief judge, the panel members shall meet to select the third panel member. Selection shall be made by alternately deleting names from the list until only one remains. The panel member selected by the teacher shall make the first deletion. The third impartial panel member shall chair the panel. No elected official shall serve as a panel member. Panel members shall not be parties to, or witnesses to, the matter grieved. With the agreement of the teacher's and division superintendent's panel members, the~~

~~impartial panel member shall have the authority to conduct the hearing and make recommendations as set forth herein while acting as a hearing officer.~~

~~The Attorney General shall represent personally or through one of his assistants any third impartial panel member who shall be made a defendant in any civil action arising out of any matter connected with his duties as a panel member. If, in the opinion of the Attorney General, it is impracticable or uneconomical for such legal representation to be rendered by him or one of his assistants, he may employ special counsel for this purpose, whose compensation shall be fixed by the Attorney General and be paid out of the funds appropriated for the administration of the Department of Education.~~

~~c. Holding of hearing. The hearing shall be held by the panel within 30 business days from the date of the selection of the final panel member. The panel shall set the date, place, and time for the hearing and shall so notify the division superintendent and the teacher. The teacher and the division superintendent each may have present at the hearing and be represented at all stages by a representative or legal counsel.~~

~~d. Procedure for fact-finding panel.~~

~~(1) The panel shall determine the propriety of attendance at the hearing of persons not having a direct interest in the hearing, provided that, at the request of the teacher, the hearing shall be private.~~

~~(2) The panel may ask, at the beginning of the hearing, for statements from the division superintendent and the teacher clarifying the issues involved.~~

~~(3) The parties shall then present their claims and evidence. Witnesses may be questioned by the panel members, the teacher and the division superintendent. The panel may, at its discretion, vary this procedure, but shall afford full and equal~~

~~opportunity to all parties to present any material or relevant evidence and shall afford the parties the right of cross-examination.~~

~~(4) The parties shall produce such additional evidence as the panel may deem necessary to an understanding and determination of the dispute. The panel shall be the judge of the relevancy and materiality of the evidence offered. All evidence shall be taken in the presence of the panel and of the parties.~~

~~(5) Exhibits offered by the teacher or the division superintendent may be received in evidence by the panel and, when so received, shall be marked and made a part of the record.~~

~~(6) The facts found and recommendations made by the panel shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the panel members.~~

~~(7) The hearing may be reopened by the panel, on its own motion or upon application of the teacher or the division superintendent, for good cause shown, to hear after-discovered evidence at any time before the panel's report is made.~~

~~(8) The panel shall make a written report which shall include its findings of fact and recommendations, and shall file it with the members of the school board, the division superintendent, and the teacher, not later than 30 business days after the completion of the hearing.~~

~~(9) A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken. However, in proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal or probation, the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. In such proceedings, if the recording is not dispensed with the two parties shall share equally the cost of the recording. If either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation.~~

~~In cases of dismissal or probation, a record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.~~

~~(10) The recommendations and findings of fact of the panel submitted to the school board shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented to the panel at the hearing. No panel member shall conduct an independent investigation involving the matter grieved.~~

~~e. Expenses.~~

~~(1) The teacher shall bear his own expenses. The school board shall bear the expenses of the division superintendent. The expenses of the panel shall be borne one half by the school board and one half by the teacher.~~

~~(2) The parties shall set the per diem rate of the panel. If the parties are unable to agree on the per diem, it shall be fixed by the chief judge of the circuit court. No employee of the school division shall receive such per diem for service on a panel during his normal business hours if he receives his normal salary for the period of such service.~~

~~(3) Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.~~

~~f. Right to further hearings. Following a hearing by a fact-finding panel, the teacher shall not have the right to a further hearing by the school board as provided in~~

~~subdivision 5 c of this section. The school board shall have the right to require a further hearing in any grievance proceeding as provided in subdivision 5 c of this section.~~

~~5. 4.~~ Step ~~5 4~~ -- Decision by the school board.

a. If a teacher elects to ~~proceed directly to a determination before~~ request a decision by the school board as provided for in Step ~~5 3~~, he must notify the superintendent in writing of the intention to ~~appeal directly to~~ make the request of the board, ~~of the grievance alleged, and the relief sought~~ within five business days after receipt of the answer as required in Step 3 or the due date thereof. Upon receipt of such notice, ~~the school board may elect to have a hearing before a fact-finding panel, as indicated in Step 4, by filing a written notice of such intention with the teacher within 10 business days of the deadline for the teacher's request for a determination by the school board~~ the board may hold a hearing on the grievance, may elect to have the hearing conducted by a hearing officer appointed by the school board consistent with the procedures in § 22.1-311 of the Code of Virginia, or may make its determination on the basis of the written evidence presented by the teacher and the recommendation of the superintendent.

b. In the case of a hearing before a fact-finding panel, the school board shall give the grievant ~~its written decision within 30 days after the school board receives both the transcript of such hearing, if any, and the panel's finding of fact and recommendations unless the school board proceeds to a hearing under subdivision 5 c of this section. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the transcript, if any; the findings of fact and recommendations of the panel; and such further evidence as the school board may receive at any further hearing which the school board elects to conduct.~~

~~c. In any case in which a hearing before a fact-finding panel is held in accordance with Step 4, the local school board may conduct a further hearing before such school board.~~

~~(1) The local school board shall initiate such hearing by sending written notice of its intention to the teacher and the division superintendent within 10 days after receipt by the board of the findings of fact and recommendations of the fact-finding panel and any transcript of the panel hearing. Such notice shall be provided upon forms to be prescribed by the Board of Education and shall specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board.~~

~~(2) In any case where such further hearing is held by a school board after a hearing before the fact-finding panel, the school board shall consider at such further hearing the transcript, if any; the findings and recommendations of the fact-finding panel; and such further evidence including, but not limited to, the testimony of those witnesses who have previously testified before the fact-finding panel as the school board deems may be appropriate or as may be offered on behalf of the grievant or the administration.~~

~~(3) The further hearing before the school board shall be set within 30 days of the initiation of such hearing, and the teacher must be given at least 15 days written notice of the date, place, and time of the hearing.~~

b. In any case in which the school board elects to hold a hearing or elects to have a hearing officer conduct the hearing, the hearing shall be set within 30 days of the school board's receipt of the notice required by subdivision 4 a of this section (Step 4a), and the teacher must be given at least 15 days' written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing.

The teacher and the division superintendent may be represented by legal counsel or other representatives. The hearing ~~before the school board~~ shall be private, unless the teacher requests a public hearing. The school board or the hearing officer, as the case may be, shall establish the rules for the conduct of ~~any~~ the hearing ~~before it.~~ Such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the division superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence, including the testimony of witnesses and the right of all parties or their representatives to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the school board or the hearing officer.

~~The~~ In the case of a hearing conducted by the school board, the school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he₇ or they₇ represented a participant in the prior proceedings, the grievant, the grievant's attorney₇ or representative and, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board ~~which~~ that has as its purpose reaching a decision on the grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative, and the superintendent, may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.

A stenographic record or tape recording of the ~~proceedings~~ hearing shall be taken. However, ~~in proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal or probation,~~ the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. ~~In such proceedings, if~~ If the recording is not dispensed with, the two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally, and if either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation.

~~In the case of dismissal or probation, a record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to the expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.~~

c. In the event of a hearing conducted by a hearing officer, the recommendation of the hearing officer shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented at the hearing. Upon the hearing officer's own motion or upon application by either party to the grievance, the hearing officer may reopen the hearing for the purpose of hearing after-discovered evidence upon a finding of good cause by the hearing officer at any time before his recommendation is due. The hearing officer shall transmit his written recommendation and a record or recording of the hearing to the school board as soon as practicable and no more than 10 business days after the hearing.

d. In the event of a hearing by a hearing officer, the school board may make its decision upon the record or recording of such hearing or the school board may elect to conduct a further hearing to receive additional evidence. The school board must hold such further hearing as soon as practicable and must give written notice of the time and place of such further hearing to the division superintendent and the teacher within 10 business days after the board received the record or recording of the initial hearing. The notice must specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board. The school board shall determine the procedure to be followed at such further hearing.

e. In the event of a hearing before the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after

the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the evidence and information presented at the school board hearing.

f. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer followed by a further hearing by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after such further hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the initial hearing, the recommendations of the hearing officer, and the evidence and information presented at the further hearing before the school board.

g. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer in cases in which no further hearing is conducted by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after receiving the record or recording of the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the hearing and the recommendations of the hearing officer.

~~(4) The decision of the school board shall be based solely on the transcript, if any; the findings of fact and recommendations of the fact-finding panel; and any evidence relevant to the issues of the original grievance procedure at the school board hearing in the presence of each party. The school board shall give the grievant its written decision within 30 days after the completion of the hearing before the school board. In the event the school board's decision is at variance with the recommendations of the fact-finding panel, the school board's written decision shall include the rationale for the decision.~~

~~d. In any case where a hearing before a fact-finding panel is not held, the board may hold a separate hearing or may make its determination on the basis of the written evidence presented by the teacher and the recommendation of the superintendent.~~

e. h. The school board shall retain its exclusive final authority over matters concerning employment and the supervision of its personnel.

8VAC20-90-40. Grievability.

A. Initial determination of grievability. Decisions regarding whether a matter is grievable shall be made by the school board at the request of the division ~~superintendent~~ administration or grievant and such decision shall be made within 10 business days of such request. The school board shall reach its decision only after allowing the division ~~superintendent~~ administration and the grievant opportunity to present written or oral arguments regarding grievability. The decision as to whether the arguments shall be written or oral shall be at the discretion of the school board. ~~Decisions shall be made within 10 business days of such request.~~ Such determination of grievability shall be made subsequent to the reduction of the grievance to writing but prior to any ~~panel or board~~ hearing by the board or a hearing officer, or the right to such determination shall be deemed to have been waived. Failure of the school board to make such a determination within such a prescribed 10-business-day period shall entitle the grievant to advance to the next step as if the matter were grievable.

B. Appeal of determination on grievability.

1. Decisions of the school board may be appealed to the circuit court having jurisdiction in the school division for a hearing on the issue of grievability.

a. Proceedings for a review of the decision of the school board shall be instituted by filing a notice of appeal with the school board within 10 business days after the date of the decision and giving a copy thereof to all other parties.

b. Within 10 business days thereafter, the school board shall transmit to the clerk of the court to which the appeal is taken, a copy of its decision, a copy of the notice of appeal, and the exhibits. The failure of the school board to transmit the record within

the time allowed shall not prejudice the rights of the grievant. The court may, on motion of the grievant, issue a writ of certiorari requiring the school board to transmit the records on or before a certain date.

c. Within 10 business days of receipt by the clerk of such record, the court, sitting without a jury, shall hear the appeal on the record transmitted by the school board and such additional evidence as may be necessary to resolve any controversy as to the correctness of the record. The court may, in its discretion, receive such other evidence as the ends of justice require.

d. The court may affirm the decision of the school board or may reverse or modify the decision. The decision of the court shall be rendered not later than 15 days from the date of the conclusion of the court's hearing.

Part III

Procedure for Dismissals ~~or Placing on Probation~~

8VAC20-90-60. Dispute resolution.

This Part III of the Procedure for Adjusting Grievances adopted by the Board of Education in accordance with the statutory mandate of Article 3 (§ 22.1-306 et seq.) of Chapter 15 of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia and the Standards of Quality for school divisions, Chapter 13.1 (§ 22.1-253.13:1 et seq.) of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia, is to provide an orderly procedure for the expeditious resolution of disputes involving the dismissal ~~or placing on probation~~ of any teacher.

8VAC20-90-70. Procedure for dismissals ~~or placing on probation.~~

A. Notice to teacher of recommendation for dismissal ~~or placing on probation.~~

1. In the event a division superintendent determines to recommend dismissal of any teacher, ~~or the placing on probation of a teacher on continuing contract,~~ written notice

shall be sent to the teacher on forms ~~to be~~ prescribed by the Board of Education notifying him of the proposed dismissal, ~~or placing on probation,~~ and informing the teacher that within ~~45~~ 10 business days after receiving the notice, the teacher may request a hearing before the school board, ~~or before a fact-finding panel as hereinafter set forth~~ or, at the option of the school board, a hearing officer appointed by the school board, as provided in § 22.1-311 of the Code of Virginia.

2. During such ~~45-day~~ 10-business-day period and thereafter until a hearing is held in accordance with the provisions herein, if one is requested by the teacher, the merits of the recommendation of the division superintendent shall not be considered, discussed, or acted upon by the school board except as provided for herein.

3. At the request of the teacher, the superintendent shall provide the reasons for the recommendation in writing or, if the teacher prefers, in a personal interview. In the event a teacher requests a hearing pursuant to § 22.1-311 or § 22.1-312 of the Code of Virginia, the division superintendent shall provide, within 10 days of the request, the teacher, or his representative, with the opportunity to inspect and copy his personnel file and all other documents relied upon in reaching the decision to recommend dismissal ~~or probation~~. Within 10 days of the request of the division superintendent, the teacher, or his representative, shall provide the division superintendent with the opportunity to inspect and copy the documents to be offered in rebuttal to the decision to recommend dismissal ~~or probation~~. The division superintendent and the teacher or his representative shall be under a continuing duty to disclose and produce any additional documents identified later that may be used in the respective parties' cases-in-chief. The cost of copying such documents shall be paid by the requesting party.

4. Upon a timely request for a hearing, the school board or, at the school board's option, a hearing officer appointed by the school board shall set a hearing within 15 days of the

request and the teacher shall be given at least five days' written notice of the time and the place of the hearing.

~~B. Fact-finding panel. Within 15 days after the teacher receives the notice referred to in subdivision A 1 of this section, either the teacher, or the school board, by written notice to the other party upon a form to be prescribed by the Board of Education, may elect to have a hearing before a fact-finding panel prior to any decision by the school board.~~

~~1. Panel. Within five business days after the receipt by the division superintendent of the request for a fact-finding panel, the teacher and the division superintendent shall each select one panel member from among the employees of the school division other than an individual involved in the recommendation of dismissal or placing on probation as a supervisor, witness, or representative. The two panel members so selected shall within five business days of their selection select a third impartial panel member.~~

~~2. Selection of impartial third member. In the event that both panel members are unable to agree upon a third panel member within five business days, both members of the panel shall request the chief judge of the circuit court having jurisdiction of the school division to furnish a list of five qualified and impartial individuals from which list one individual shall be selected by the two members of the panel as the third member. The individuals named by the chief judge may reside either within or without the jurisdiction of the circuit court, be residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and in all cases shall possess some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law, and shall be deemed by the judge capable of presiding over an administrative hearing. Within five business days after receipt by the two panel members of the list of fact finders nominated by the chief judge, the panel members shall meet to select the third panel member. Selection shall be made by the panel members alternately deleting names from the list until only one remains with the panel member selected by the teacher to make~~

~~the first deletion. The third impartial panel member shall chair the panel. No elected official shall serve as a panel member. Panel members shall not be parties to, or witnesses to, the matter grieved. With the agreement of the teacher's and division superintendent's panel members, the impartial panel member shall have the authority to conduct the hearing and make recommendations as set forth herein while acting as a hearing officer.~~

~~The Attorney General shall represent personally or through one of his assistants any third impartial panel member who shall be made a defendant in any civil action arising out of any matter connected with his duties as a panel member. If, in the opinion of the Attorney General, it is impracticable or uneconomical for such legal representation to be rendered by him or one of his assistants, he may employ special counsel for this purpose, whose compensation shall be fixed by the Attorney General and be paid out of the funds appropriated for the administration of the Department of Education.~~

~~3. Holding of hearing. The hearing shall be held by the panel within 30 calendar days from the date of the selection of the final panel member. The panel shall set the date, place, and time for the hearing and shall so notify the division superintendent and the teacher. The teacher and the division superintendent each may have present at the hearing and be represented at all stages by legal counsel or another representative.~~

~~4. Procedure for fact-finding panel.~~

~~a. The panel shall determine the propriety of attendance at the hearing of persons not having a direct interest in the hearing, provided that, at the request of the teacher, the hearing shall be private.~~

~~b. The panel may ask, at the beginning of the hearing, for statements from the division superintendent and the teacher (or their representative) clarifying the issues involved.~~

~~c. The parties shall then present their claims and evidence. Witnesses may be questioned by the panel members, the teacher and the division superintendent. However, the panel may, at its discretion, vary this procedure but shall afford full and equal opportunity to all parties for presentation of any material or relevant evidence and shall afford the parties the right of cross-examination.~~

B. Procedure for hearing.

1. The hearing shall be conducted by the school board or, at the school board's option, a hearing officer appointed by the school board. The teacher and the division superintendent may be represented by legal counsel or other representatives. The hearing shall be private, unless the teacher requests a public hearing. The school board or hearing officer, as the case may be, shall establish the rules for the conduct of the hearing, and such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the division superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence, including the testimony of witnesses, and the right of all parties to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the school board or hearing officer.

~~2.~~ 2. The parties shall produce such additional evidence as the panel school board or hearing officer may deem necessary to an understanding and determination of the dispute. The panel school board or hearing officer shall be determine the judge of relevancy and materiality of the evidence offered. All evidence shall be taken in the presence of the panel school board or hearing officer and of the parties.

e. 3. Exhibits offered by the teacher or the division superintendent may be received in evidence by the panel school board or hearing officer and, when so received, shall be marked and made a part of the record.

~~f. The facts found and recommendations made by the panel shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the panel members.~~

~~g. The recommendations and findings of fact of the panel shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented to the panel at the hearing. No panel member shall conduct an independent investigation involving the matter grieved.~~

~~h. The hearing may be reopened by the panel at any time before the panel's report is made upon its own motion or upon application of the teacher or the division superintendent for good cause shown to hear after discovered evidence.~~

~~i. The panel shall make a written report which shall include its findings of fact and recommendations and shall file it with the members of the school board, the division superintendent and the teacher, not later than 30 days after the completion of the hearing.~~

~~j. A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken. However, in proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal or probation, the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. In such proceedings, if the recording is not dispensed with, the two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally; if either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation.~~

~~In cases of dismissal or probation, a record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior~~

~~to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.~~

~~5. Expenses.~~

~~a. The teacher shall bear his own expenses. The school board shall bear the expenses of the division superintendent. The expenses of the panel shall be borne one half by the school board and one half by the teacher.~~

~~b. The parties shall set the per diem rate of the panel. If the parties are unable to agree on the per diem, it shall be fixed by the chief judge of the circuit court. No employee of the school division shall receive such per diem for service on a panel during his normal business hours if he receives his normal salary for the period of such service.~~

~~6. Right to further hearing. If the school board elects to have a hearing by a fact-finding panel on the dismissal or placing on probation of a teacher, the teacher shall have the right to a further hearing by the school board as provided in subsection C of this section. The school board shall have the right to require a further hearing as provided in subsection C also.~~

~~7. Witnesses. Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.~~

~~C. Hearing by school board.~~

~~1. After receipt of the notice of pending dismissal or placing on probation described in subdivision A 1 of this section, the teacher may request a hearing before the school board by delivering written notice to the division superintendent within 15 days from the~~

~~receipt of notice from the superintendent. Subsequent to the hearing by a fact-finding panel under subsection B of this section, the teacher, as permitted by subdivision B 6 of this section, or the school board may request a school board hearing by written notice to the opposing party and the division superintendent within 10 business days after the receipt by the party initiating such hearing of the findings of fact and recommendations made by the fact-finding panel and the transcript of the panel hearing. Such notice shall be provided upon a form to be prescribed by the Board of Education and shall specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board.~~

~~2. In any case in which a further hearing is held by a school board after a hearing before the fact-finding panel, the school board shall consider at such further hearing the record, or transcript, if any, the findings of fact and recommendations made by the fact-finding panel and such further evidence, including, but not limited to, the testimony of those witnesses who have previously testified before the fact-finding panel as the school board deems may be appropriate or as may be offered on behalf of the teacher or the superintendent.~~

~~3. The school board hearing shall be set and conducted within 30 days of the receipt of the teacher's notice or the giving by the school board of its notice. The teacher shall be given at least 15 days written notice of the date, place, and time of the hearing and such notice shall also be provided to the division superintendent.~~

~~4. The teacher and the division superintendent may be represented by legal counsel or other representatives. The hearing before the school board shall be private, unless the teacher requests a public hearing. The school board shall establish the rules for the conduct of any hearing before it, and such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the division superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence including the testimony of witnesses and the right of all~~

~~parties to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the school board. The school board may hear a recommendation for dismissal and make a determination whether to make a recommendation to the Board of Education regarding the teacher's license at the same hearing or hold a separate hearing for each action.~~

~~5. A record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.~~

~~6. The school board shall give the teacher its written decision within 30 days after the completion of the hearing before the school board.~~

~~7. The decision by the school board shall be based on the transcript, the findings of the fact and recommendations made by the fact-finding panel, and any evidence relevant to the issues of the original grievance produced at the school board hearing in the presence of each party.~~

~~The school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he or they represented a participant in the prior proceedings, the grievant, the grievant's attorney, or representative and, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board which has as its purpose reaching a decision on a grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative and the superintendent may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.~~

4. A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken. The two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally. The record or recording of the proceedings shall be preserved for a period of six months. If the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the transcription.

5. The teacher shall bear his own expenses. The school board shall bear the expenses of the division superintendent and the hearing officer.

6. Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.

7. In the event of a hearing conducted by a hearing officer, the recommendation of the hearing officer shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented at the hearing. Upon the hearing officer's own motion or upon application by the teacher or the division superintendent, the hearing officer may reopen the hearing for the purpose of hearing after-discovered evidence upon a finding of good cause by the hearing officer at any time before his recommendation is due. The hearing officer shall transmit his written recommendation and a record or recording of the hearing to the school board as soon as practicable and no more than 10 business days after the hearing.

8. In the event of a hearing by a hearing officer, the school board may make its decision upon the record or recording of such hearing or the school board may elect to conduct a further hearing to receive additional evidence. The school board must hold such further hearing as soon as practicable and must give written notice of the time and place of such further hearing to the division superintendent and the teacher within 10 business days after the board received the record or recording of the initial hearing. The notice

must specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board. The school board shall determine the procedure to be followed at such further hearing.

D. C. School board determination.

~~1. In any case in which a hearing is held before a fact-finding panel but no further hearing before the school board is requested by either party, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision within 30 days after the school board receives both the transcript of such hearing and the panel's findings of the fact and recommendation. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the transcript, the findings of fact, and the recommendations made by the panel. In the event of a hearing before the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the evidence and information presented at the school board hearing.~~

2. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer followed by a further hearing by the school board pursuant to subdivision B 8 of this section, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after such further hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the initial hearing, the recommendations of the hearing officer, and the evidence and information presented at the further hearing before the school board.

3. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer in cases in which no further hearing is conducted by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after receiving the record or recording of the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the hearing and the recommendations of the hearing officer.

~~2- 4. The school board may dismiss, or suspend, or place on probation a teacher upon a majority vote of a quorum of the school board. In the event the school board's decision is at variance with the recommendation of the fact-finding panel, the school board shall be required to conduct an additional hearing, which shall be public unless the teacher requests a private one. However, if the fact-finding hearing was held in private, the additional hearing shall be held in private. The hearing shall be conducted by the school board pursuant to subdivisions C 1 and 2 of this section, except that the grievant and the division superintendent shall be allowed to appear, to be represented, and to give testimony. However, the additional hearing shall not include examination and cross-examination of any other witnesses. The school board's written decision shall include the rationale for the decision. The school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he or they represented a participant in the prior proceedings; the grievant; the grievant's attorney or representative; and, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board that has as its purpose reaching a decision on a grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative and the superintendent may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.~~

FORMS (8VAC20-90)

~~Statement of Grievance, eff. 2/05~~

~~Principal's Decision, eff. 2/05~~

~~Superintendent's Level, eff. 2/05~~

~~Request for Hearing (Decision to be Presented to Grievant), eff. 2/05~~

~~Notice of Proposed Dismissal or Proposed Placing on Probation, eff. 2/05~~

~~Request for Hearing (to be submitted to Superintendent), eff. 2/05.~~

[Statement of Grievance \(undated, filed 11/2015\)](#)

[Principal's Decision \(undated, filed 11/2015\)](#)

[Superintendent's Decision \(undated, filed 11/2015\)](#)

[Request for Hearing \(undated, filed 11/2015\)](#)

[Notice of Proposed Dismissal \(undated, filed 11/2015\)](#)



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Final Regulation Agency Background Document

Agency name	Virginia Board of Education
Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) citation(s)	8 VAC 20-90-10 et seq.
Regulation title(s)	<i>Procedure for Adjusting Grievances</i>
Action title	Revise the <i>Procedure for Adjusting Grievances</i>
Date this document prepared	April 15, 2016

This information is required for executive branch review and the Virginia Registrar of Regulations, pursuant to the Virginia Administrative Process Act (APA), Executive Orders 17 (2014) and 58 (1999), and the *Virginia Register Form, Style, and Procedure Manual*.

Brief summary

Please provide a brief summary of the proposed new regulation, proposed amendments to the existing regulation, or the regulation proposed to be repealed. Alert the reader to all substantive matters or changes. If applicable, generally describe the existing regulation.

The *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* provides (1) an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of local school board policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of teachers, other than dismissals or probation and (2) an orderly procedure for the expeditious resolution of disputes involving the dismissal any teacher.

The regulations, *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, were last amended effective May 2, 2005. In addition to technical edits, the proposed amendments include the following provisions to comport with the 2013 and 2014 General Assembly legislation:

- Changes the grievance procedure for teachers by giving local school boards the option to assign a grievance hearing to be heard by an impartial hearing officer designated by the local school board;
- Removes the option for a grievance to be heard before a fact-finding panel;

- Removes “placing on probation” from the definition of a Grievance;
- Revises the Board of Education forms prescribed by the *Code of Virginia*.

Acronyms and Definitions

Please define all acronyms used in the Agency Background Document. Also, please define any technical terms that are used in the document that are not also defined in the “Definition” section of the regulations.

N/A

Statement of final agency action

Please provide a statement of the final action taken by the agency including: 1) the date the action was taken; 2) the name of the agency taking the action; and 3) the title of the regulation.

- (1) [To be presented to the Board of Education on April 28, 2016, for final review and action];
- (2) Virginia Board of Education
- (3) *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*

Legal basis

Please identify the (1) the agency (includes any type of promulgating entity) and (2) the state and/or federal legal authority for the proposed regulatory action, including the most relevant citations to the Code of Virginia or General Assembly chapter number(s), if applicable. Your citation should include a specific provision, if any, authorizing the promulgating entity to regulate this specific subject or program, as well as a reference to the agency’s overall regulatory authority.

The *Constitution of Virginia* grants the Board of Education authority for the general supervision of the public school system, and Section 22.1-16 of the *Code of Virginia* authorizes the Board to promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out its powers and duties and the provisions of this title.

Constitution of Virginia ([Article VIII, Section 4](#)):
“The general supervision of the public school system shall be vested in a Board of Education....”

Code of Virginia, Section [22.1-16](#). Bylaws and regulations generally.

The Board of Education may adopt bylaws for its own government and promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out its powers and duties and the provisions of this title.

Code of Virginia
§§ [2.2-507](#), [22.1-79](#), [22.1-253.13:5](#), [22.1-293](#), [22.1-294](#), [22.1-295](#), [22.1-298.1](#), [22.1-299](#), [22.1-302](#), [22.1-303](#), [22.1-304](#), [22.1-305](#), [22.1-305.1](#), [22.1-306](#), [22.1-307](#), [22.1-309](#), [22.1-311](#), [22.1-313](#), and [22.1-314](#) of the *Code of Virginia* [References: 2013 General Assembly: Senate Bill [2151](#) bill is identical to House Bill [1223](#); 2014 General Assembly: House Bill [977](#) and Senate Bill [43](#)]

Purpose

Please explain the need for the new or amended regulation. Describe the rationale or justification of the proposed regulatory action. Describe the specific reasons the regulation is essential to protect the health, safety or welfare of citizens. Discuss the goals of the proposal and the problems the proposal is intended to solve.

The *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* is essential to protect the health, safety, or welfare of citizens as the regulations provide (1) an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of local school board policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of teachers, other than dismissals or probation and (2) an orderly procedure for the expeditious resolution of disputes involving the dismissal of any teacher.

In addition to technical edits, the proposed amendments were required to comport with the 2013 and 2014 General Assembly legislation.

Substance

Please briefly identify and explain the new substantive provisions, the substantive changes to existing sections, or both.

The Virginia Board of Education regulations, *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances*, were last amended effective May 2, 2005. The 2013 and 2014 General Assembly approved legislation resulting in the need to make revisions to the regulations. Other than changing the *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* to comport with the 2013 and 2014 legislation, no additional substantive revisions were made. The major revisions to the regulations are as follows:

- Changes the grievance procedure for teachers by giving local school boards the option to assign a grievance hearing to be heard by an impartial hearing officer designated by the local school board;
- Removes the option for a grievance to be heard before a fact-finding panel;
- Removes “placing on probation” from the definition of a Grievance;
- Revises the Board of Education forms prescribed by the *Code of Virginia*.

Issues

Please identify the issues associated with the proposed regulatory action, including: 1) the primary advantages and disadvantages to the public, such as individual private citizens or businesses, of implementing the new or amended provisions; 2) the primary advantages and disadvantages to the agency or the Commonwealth; and 3) other pertinent matters of interest to the regulated community, government officials, and the public. If there are no disadvantages to the public or the Commonwealth, please indicate.

The *Procedure for Adjusting Grievances* provides (1) an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of local school board

policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of teachers, other than dismissals or probation and (2) an orderly procedure for the expeditious resolution of disputes involving the dismissal any teacher.

The regulations do not pose any major disadvantages to the public or the Commonwealth.

Requirements more restrictive than federal

Please identify and describe any requirement of the proposal which is more restrictive than applicable federal requirements. Include a rationale for the need for the more restrictive requirements. If there are no applicable federal requirements or no requirements that exceed applicable federal requirements, include a statement to that effect.

The regulations are state requirements, and there are no applicable federal requirements related to this regulatory revision.

Localities particularly affected

Please identify any locality particularly affected by the proposed regulation. Locality particularly affected means any locality which bears any identified disproportionate material impact which would not be experienced by other localities.

No localities are particularly affected by the proposed regulation.

Family impact

Please assess the impact of this regulatory action on the institution of the family and family stability including to what extent the regulatory action will: 1) strengthen or erode the authority and rights of parents in the education, nurturing, and supervision of their children; 2) encourage or discourage economic self-sufficiency, self-pride, and the assumption of responsibility for oneself, one's spouse, and one's children and/or elderly parents; 3) strengthen or erode the marital commitment; and 4) increase or decrease disposable family income.

The proposed regulations address the procedure for adjusting grievances, ensuring an orderly procedure for resolving disputes.

Changes made since the proposed stage

*Please list all changes that made to the text of the proposed regulation and the rationale for the changes; explain the new requirements and what they mean rather than merely quoting the proposed text of the regulation. *Please put an asterisk next to any substantive changes.*

No changes have been made since the proposed stage.

Public comment

Please summarize all comments received during the public comment period following the publication of the proposed stage, and provide the agency response. If no comment was received, please so indicate. Please distinguish between comments received on Town Hall versus those made in a public hearing or submitted directly to the agency or board.

No public comments have been received since the publication of the proposed stage.

All changes made in this regulatory action

Please list all changes that are being proposed and the consequences of the proposed changes. Describe new provisions and/or all changes to existing sections. Explain the new requirements and what they mean rather than merely quoting the proposed text of the regulation

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
<p>8VAC20-90-10. Definitions</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Revisions were made to conform to changes in the <i>Code of Virginia</i> (2013 and 2014 General Assembly); Forms in the appendices of the document also were revised to comport with the revisions.</p> <p>8VAC20-90-10. Definitions.</p> <p>The following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.</p> <p>"Business day" means, in accordance with § 22.1-312 of the Code of Virginia, any day that the relevant school board office is open.</p> <p>"Days" means calendar days unless a different meaning is clearly expressed in this procedure. Whenever any period of time fixed by this procedure shall expire the last day for performing an act required by this procedure falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the period of time for taking action under this procedure shall be extended to the act may be performed on the next day if it that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.</p> <p>"Dismissal" means the dismissal of any teacher within the term of such teacher's contract and the nonrenewal of a contract of a teacher on a continuing contract.</p> <p>"Grievance" means, for the purpose of Part II (8VAC20-90-20 et seq.), a complaint or a dispute by a teacher relating to his employment, including but not necessarily limited to the application or interpretation of personnel policies, rules and regulations, ordinances, and statutes; acts of reprisal as a result <u>against a teacher for filing or processing a grievance, or participating as a witness in any step, meeting, or hearing related to a grievance; or complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, political affiliation, handicap, age, national origin, or sex.</u> "Grievance" means, for the purposes of Part III (8VAC20-90-60 et seq.), a complaint or a dispute involving a teacher relating to his employment involving dismissal or placing on probation. The term "grievance" shall not include a complaint or dispute by a teacher relating to the establishment and revision of wages or salaries, position classifications or general benefits; suspension of a teacher or</p>

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
		<p>nonrenewal of the contract of a teacher who has not achieved continuing contract status; the establishment or contents of ordinances, statutes or personnel policies, procedures, rules and regulations; failure to promote; or discharge, layoff, or suspension from duties because of decrease in enrollment, decrease in a particular subject, <u>enrollment in or abolition of a particular subject</u>, <u>or insufficient funding</u>; hiring, transfer, assignment and retention of teachers within the school division; suspension from duties in emergencies; or the methods, means and personnel by which the school division's operations are to be carried on; <u>or coaching or extracurricular activity sponsorship</u>. While these management rights are reserved to the school board, failure to apply, where applicable, these rules, regulations, policies, or procedures as written or established by the school board is grievable.</p> <p><u>"Hearing officer" means an impartial hearing officer from outside the school division who possesses some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law and who is capable of presiding over an administrative hearing.</u></p> <p>"Personnel file" means, for the purposes of Part III (8VAC20-90-60 et seq.), any and all memoranda, entries or other documents included in the teacher's file as maintained in the central school administration office or in any file regarding the teacher maintained within a school in which the teacher serves.</p> <p>"Probation" means a period not to exceed one year during which time it shall be the duty of the teacher to remedy those deficiencies which give rise to the probationary status.</p> <p>"Teacher" or "teachers" means, for the purposes of Part II (8VAC20-90-20 et seq.), all employees of the school division involved in classroom instruction and all other full-time employees of the school division except those employees classified as supervising employees. "Teacher" means, for the purposes of Part III (8VAC20-90-60 et seq.), all regularly certified <u>licensed</u> professional public school personnel employed <u>by any school division</u> under a written contract as provided by § 22.1-302 of the Code of Virginia, by any school division as a teacher or <u>as an assistant principal, principal, or supervisor of classroom teachers but excluding all superintendents</u> <u>as provided by § 22.1-294 of the Code of Virginia.</u></p> <p>"Shall file," "shall respond in writing," or "shall serve written notice" means the document is either delivered personally to the grievant or office of the proper school board representative or is mailed by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and postmarked within the time limits prescribed by this procedure <u>to the grievant or office of the proper school board representative.</u></p> <p>"Supervisory employee" means any person having authority in the interest of the board (i) to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees; and (ii) to direct other employees; or (iii) to adjust the grievance of other employees; or (iv) to recommend any action set forth in clause (i), (ii), or (iii) above; provided that the authority to act as set forth in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) requires the exercise of independent judgment and is not merely routine and clerical in nature.</p> <p>"Written grievance appeal" means a written or typed statement describing the event or action complained of, or the date of the event or action <u>complained of</u>, and a concise description of those policies, procedures <u>rules</u>, regulations, ordinances or statutes upon which the teacher bases his claim. The grievant shall specify what he expects to obtain through use of the grievance procedure. <u>A statement written grievance appeal shall be written upon on forms prescribed by the Board of Education and supplied by the local school board.</u></p>

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
<p>8VAC20-90-20. Purpose of Part II of this grievance procedure</p> <p>8VAC20-90-30. Grievance procedure.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Part II Grievance Procedure</p> <p>8VAC20-90-20. Purpose of Part II of this grievance procedure. The purpose of Part II of the Procedure for Adjusting Grievances is to provide an orderly procedure for resolving disputes concerning the application, interpretation, or violation of any of the provisions of local school board policies, rules and regulations as they affect the work of teachers, other than dismissals or probation. An equitable solution of grievances should be secured at the most immediate administrative level. The procedure should not be construed as limiting the right of any teacher to discuss any matter of concern with any member of the school administration, nor should the procedure be construed to restrict any teacher's right to seek, or the school division administration's right to provide, review of complaints that are not included within the definition of a grievance. Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted to limit a school board's exclusive final authority over the management and operation of the school division.</p> <p>8VAC20-90-30. Grievance procedure. Recognizing that grievances should be begun <u>begin</u> and <u>should be</u> settled promptly, a grievance must be initiated within 15 business days following either the event giving rise to the grievance, or within 15 business days following the time when the employee knew or reasonably should have known of its occurrence. Grievances shall be processed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Step 1 -- Informal. The first step shall be an informal conference between the teacher and his immediate supervisor (which may be the principal). The teacher shall state the nature of the grievance, and the immediate supervisor shall attempt to adjust the grievance. It is mandatory that the teacher present the grievance informally prior to proceeding to Step 2. 2. Step 2 -- Principal. If for any reason the grievance is not resolved informally in Step 1 to the satisfaction of the teacher, the teacher must perfect his grievance by filing said grievance in writing <u>a written grievance appeal on the required form</u> within 15 business days following the event giving rise to the grievance, or within 15 business days following the time when the employee knew or reasonably should have known of its occurrence, specifying on the form the specific relief expected. Regardless of the outcome of Step 1, if a written grievance <u>appeal</u> is not, without just cause, filed within the specified time, the grievance will be barred. A meeting shall be held between the principal (or his designee or both) and the teacher (or his designee or both) within five business days of the receipt by the principal of the written grievance. At such meeting the teacher or other party involved, or both, shall be entitled to present appropriate witnesses and to be accompanied by a representative other than an attorney. The principal (or his designee or both) shall respond in writing within five business days following such meeting. The principal may forward to the teacher within five days from the receipt of the written grievance a written request for more specific information regarding the grievance. The teacher shall file an answer thereto within 10 business days, and the meeting must then be held within five business days thereafter. 3. Step 3 -- Superintendent. If the grievance is not settled to

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
		<p>the teacher's satisfaction in Step 2, the teacher can proceed to Step 3 by filing a written notice of appeal with the superintendent, accompanied by the original <u>written</u> grievance appeal form within five business days after receipt of the Step 2 answer (or the due date of such answer). A meeting shall then be held between the superintendent (or his designee or both) and the teacher (or his designee or both) at a mutually agreeable time within five business days. <u>The superintendent or designee may make a written request for more specific information from the teacher, but only if such information was not requested in Step 2. The teacher shall file an answer to such request within 10 business days, and the meeting shall be held within five business days of the date on which the answer was received.</u> At such meeting both the superintendent and the teacher shall be entitled to present witnesses and to be accompanied by a representative who may be an attorney. A representative may examine, cross-examine, question, and present evidence on behalf of a grievant or the superintendent without violating the provisions of § 54.1- 3904 of the Code of Virginia. If no settlement can be reached in said meeting, the superintendent (or his designee) shall respond in writing within five business days following such meeting. The superintendent or designee may make a written request for more specific information from the teacher, but only if such was not requested in Step 2. Such request shall be answered within 10 business days, and the meeting shall be held within five business days of the date on which the answer was received. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the teacher in Step 3, the teacher may elect to have a hearing by a fact-finding panel, as provided in Step 4, or after giving proper notice may request a decision by the school board pursuant to Step 5 4.</p> <p>4. Step 4 — Fact-finding panel. In the event the grievance is not settled upon completion of Step 3, either the teacher or the school board may elect to have a hearing by a fact-finding panel prior to a decision by the school board, as provided in Step 4. If the teacher elects to proceed to Step 4, he must notify the superintendent in writing of the intention to request a fact-finding panel and enclose a copy of the original grievance form within five business days after receipt of a Step 3 answer (or the due date of such answer). If the school board elects to proceed to a fact-finding panel, the superintendent must serve written notice of the board's intention upon the grievant within 15 business days after the answer provided by Step 3.</p> <p>a. Panel. Within five business days after the receipt by the division superintendent of the request for a fact-finding panel, the teacher and the division superintendent shall each select one panel member from among the employees of the school division other than an individual involved in any previous phase of the grievance procedure as a supervisor, witness, or representative. The two panel members so selected shall within five business days of their selection select a third impartial panel member.</p> <p>b. Selection of impartial third member. In the event that both panel members are unable to agree upon a third panel member within five business days, both members of the panel shall request the chief judge of the circuit court</p>

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
		<p>having jurisdiction of the school division to furnish a list of five qualified and impartial individuals from which one individual shall be selected by the two members of the panel to serve as the third member. The individuals named by the chief judge may reside either within or outside the jurisdiction of the circuit court, be residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and in all cases shall possess some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law and shall be deemed by the judge capable of presiding over an administrative hearing. Within five business days after receipt by the two panel members of the list of fact finders nominated by the chief judge, the panel members shall meet to select the third panel member. Selection shall be made by alternately deleting names from the list until only one remains. The panel member selected by the teacher shall make the first deletion. The third impartial panel member shall chair the panel. No elected official shall serve as a panel member. Panel members shall not be parties to, or witnesses to, the matter grieved. With the agreement of the teacher's and division superintendent's panel members, the impartial panel member shall have the authority to conduct the hearing and make recommendations as set forth herein while acting as a hearing officer.</p> <p>The Attorney General shall represent personally or through one of his assistants any third impartial panel member who shall be made a defendant in any civil action arising out of any matter connected with his duties as a panel member. If, in the opinion of the Attorney General, it is impracticable or uneconomical for such legal representation to be rendered by him or one of his assistants, he may employ special counsel for this purpose, whose compensation shall be fixed by the Attorney General and be paid out of the funds appropriated for the administration of the Department of Education.</p> <p>c. Holding of hearing. The hearing shall be held by the panel within 30 business days from the date of the selection of the final panel member. The panel shall set the date, place, and time for the hearing and shall so notify the division superintendent and the teacher. The teacher and the division superintendent each may have present at the hearing and be represented at all stages by a representative or legal counsel.</p> <p>d. Procedure for fact-finding panel.</p> <p>(1) The panel shall determine the propriety of attendance at the hearing of persons not having a direct interest in the hearing, provided that, at the request of the teacher, the hearing shall be private.</p> <p>(2) The panel may ask, at the beginning of the hearing, for statements from the division superintendent and the teacher clarifying the issues involved.</p> <p>(3) The parties shall then present their claims and evidence. Witnesses may be questioned by the panel members, the teacher and the division superintendent. The panel may, at its discretion, vary this procedure, but shall afford full and equal opportunity to all parties to present any material or relevant evidence and shall afford</p>

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		<p>the parties the right of cross-examination.</p> <p>(4) The parties shall produce such additional evidence as the panel may deem necessary to an understanding and determination of the dispute. The panel shall be the judge of the relevancy and materiality of the evidence offered. All evidence shall be taken in the presence of the panel and of the parties.</p> <p>(5) Exhibits offered by the teacher of the division superintendent may be received in evidence by the panel and, when so received, shall be marked and made a part of the record.</p> <p>(6) The facts found and recommendations made by the panel shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the panel members.</p> <p>(7) The hearing may be reopened by the panel, on its own motion or upon application of the teacher or the division superintendent, for good cause shown, to hear after-discovered evidence at any time before the panel's report is made.</p> <p>(8) The panel shall make a written report which shall include its findings of fact and recommendations, and shall file it with the members of the school board, the division superintendent, and the teacher, not later than 30 business days after the completion of the hearing.</p> <p>(9) A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken. However, in proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal or probation, the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. In such proceedings, if the recording is not dispensed with the two parties shall share equally the cost of the recording. If either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation.</p> <p>In cases of dismissal or probation, a record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.</p> <p>(10) The recommendations and findings of fact of the panel submitted to the school board shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented to the panel at the hearing. No panel member shall conduct an independent investigation involving the matter grieved.</p> <p>e. Expenses:</p> <p>(1) The teacher shall bear his own expenses. The school board shall bear the expenses of the division superintendent. The expenses of the panel shall be borne one half by the school board and one half by the teacher.</p> <p>(2) The parties shall set the per diem rate of the panel. If the parties are unable to agree on the per diem, it shall be fixed by the chief judge of the circuit court. No employee of the school division shall receive such per diem for service on a panel during his normal business hours if he receives his normal salary for the period of such service.</p> <p>(3) Witnesses who are employees of the school board</p>

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		<p>shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.</p> <p>f. Right to further hearings. Following a hearing by a fact-finding panel, the teacher shall not have the right to a further hearing by the school board as provided in subdivision 5 c of this section. The school board shall have the right to require a further hearing in any grievance proceeding as provided in subdivision 5 c of this section.</p> <p>5. 4. Step 5 4 -- Decision by the school board.</p> <p>a. If a teacher elects to proceed directly to a determination before request a decision by the school board as provided for in Step 5 3, he must notify the superintendent in writing of the intention to appeal directly to make the request of the board, of the grievance alleged, and the relief sought within five business days after receipt of the answer as required in Step 3 or the due date thereof. Upon receipt of such notice, the school board may elect to have a hearing before a fact-finding panel, as indicated in Step 4, by filing a written notice of such intention with the teacher within 10 business days of the deadline for the teacher's request for a determination by the school board the board may hold a hearing on the grievance, may elect to have the hearing conducted by a hearing officer appointed by the school board consistent with the procedures in § 22.1-311 of the Code of Virginia, or may make its determination on the basis of the written evidence presented by the teacher and the recommendation of the superintendent.</p> <p>b. In the case of a hearing before a fact-finding panel, the school board shall give the grievant its written decision within 30 days after the school board receives both the transcript of such hearing, if any, and the panel's finding of fact and recommendations unless the school board proceeds to a hearing under subdivision 5 c of this section. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the transcript, if any; the findings of fact and recommendations of the panel; and such further evidence as the school board may receive at any further hearing which the school board elects to conduct.</p> <p>c. In any case in which a hearing before a fact finding panel is held in accordance with Step 4, the local school board may conduct a further hearing before such school board.</p> <p>(1) The local school board shall initiate such hearing by sending written notice of its intention to the teacher and the division superintendent within 10 days after receipt by the board of the findings of fact and recommendations of the fact-finding panel and any transcript of the panel hearing. Such notice shall be provided upon forms to be prescribed by the Board of Education and shall specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board.</p> <p>(2) In any case where such further hearing is held by a school board after a hearing before the fact-finding panel, the school board shall consider at such further hearing the transcript, if any; the findings and recommendations of the fact-finding panel; and such further evidence including, but not limited to, the testimony of those witnesses who have previously testified before the fact-finding panel as</p>

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		<p>the school board deems may be appropriate or as may be offered on behalf of the grievant or the administration.</p> <p>(3) The further hearing before the school board shall be set within 30 days of the initiation of such hearing, and the teacher must be given at least 15 days written notice of the date, place, and time of the hearing.</p> <p><u>b. In any case in which the school board elects to hold a hearing or elects to have a hearing officer conduct the hearing, the hearing shall be set within 30 days of the school board's receipt of the notice required by subdivision 4 a of this section (Step 4a), and the teacher must be given at least 15 days' written notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing.</u></p> <p>The teacher and the division superintendent may be represented by legal counsel or other representatives. The hearing before the school board shall be private, unless the teacher requests a public hearing. The school board or the hearing officer, as the case may be, shall establish the rules for the conduct of any the hearing before it. Such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the division superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence, including the testimony of witnesses and the right of all parties or their representatives to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the school board or the hearing officer.</p> <p><u>The In the case of a hearing conducted by the school board, the school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he, or they, represented a participant in the prior proceedings, the grievant, the grievant's attorney, or representative and, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board which that has as its purpose reaching a decision on the grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative, and the superintendent, may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.</u></p> <p>A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings <u>hearing</u> shall be taken. However, in proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal or probation, the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. In such proceedings, <u>if</u> the recording is not dispensed with, the two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally, and if either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation.</p> <p>In the case of dismissal or probation, a record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to the expiration of the six month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.</p> <p><u>c. In the event of a hearing conducted by a hearing officer,</u></p>

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		<p><u>the recommendation of the hearing officer shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented at the hearing. Upon the hearing officer's own motion or upon application by either party to the grievance, the hearing officer may reopen the hearing for the purpose of hearing after-discovered evidence upon a finding of good cause by the hearing officer at any time before his recommendation is due. The hearing officer shall transmit his written recommendation and a record or recording of the hearing to the school board as soon as practicable and no more than 10 business days after the hearing.</u></p> <p><u>d. In the event of a hearing by a hearing officer, the school board may make its decision upon the record or recording of such hearing or the school board may elect to conduct a further hearing to receive additional evidence. The school board must hold such further hearing as soon as practicable and must give written notice of the time and place of such further hearing to the division superintendent and the teacher within 10 business days after the board received the record or recording of the initial hearing. The notice must specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board. The school board shall determine the procedure to be followed at such further hearing.</u></p> <p><u>e. In the event of a hearing before the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the evidence and information presented at the school board hearing.</u></p> <p><u>f. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer followed by a further hearing by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after such further hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the initial hearing, the recommendations of the hearing officer, and the evidence and information presented at the further hearing before the school board.</u></p> <p><u>g. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer in cases in which no further hearing is conducted by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after receiving the record or recording of the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the hearing and the recommendations of the hearing officer.</u></p> <p><u>(4) The decision of the school board shall be based solely on the transcript, if any; the findings of fact and recommendations of the fact-finding panel; and any evidence relevant to the issues of the original grievance procedure at the school board hearing in the presence of each party. The school board shall give the grievant its written decision within 30 days after the completion of the hearing before the school board. In the event the school board's decision is at variance with the recommendations of the fact-finding panel, the school board's written decision shall include the rationale for the decision.</u></p>

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
<p>8VAC20-90-40. Grievability.</p>		<p>d. In any case where a hearing before a fact-finding panel is not held, the board may hold a separate hearing or may make its determination on the basis of the written evidence presented by the teacher and the recommendation of the superintendent.</p> <p>e. h. The school board shall retain its exclusive final authority over matters concerning employment and the supervision of its personnel.</p> <p>8VAC20-90-40. Grievability.</p> <p>A. Initial determination of grievability. Decisions regarding whether a matter is grievable shall be made by the school board at the request of the division superintendent <u>administration</u> or grievant <u>and such decision shall be made within 10 business days of such request.</u> The school board shall reach its decision only after allowing the division superintendent <u>administration</u> and the grievant opportunity to present written or oral arguments regarding grievability. The decision as to whether the arguments shall be written or oral shall be at the discretion of the school board. Decisions shall be made within 10 business days of such request. Such determination of grievability shall be made subsequent to the reduction of the grievance to writing but prior to any panel or board hearing <u>by the board or a hearing officer,</u> or the right to such determination shall be deemed to have been waived. Failure of the school board to make such a determination within such a prescribed 10-business-day period shall entitle the grievant to advance to the next step as if the matter were grievable.</p> <p>B. Appeal of determination on grievability.</p> <p>1. Decisions of the school board may be appealed to the circuit court having jurisdiction in the school division for a hearing on the issue of grievability.</p> <p>a. Proceedings for a review of the decision of the school board shall be instituted by filing a notice of appeal with the school board within 10 business days after the date of the decision and giving a copy thereof to all other parties.</p> <p>b. Within 10 business days thereafter, the school board shall transmit to the clerk of the court to which the appeal is taken, a copy of its decision, a copy of the notice of appeal, and the exhibits. The failure of the school board to transmit the record within the time allowed shall not prejudice the rights of the grievant. The court may, on motion of the grievant, issue a writ of certiorari requiring the school board to transmit the records on or before a certain date.</p> <p>c. Within 10 business days of receipt by the clerk of such record, the court, sitting without a jury, shall hear the appeal on the record transmitted by the school board and such additional evidence as may be necessary to resolve any controversy as to the correctness of the record. The court may, in its discretion, receive such other evidence as the ends of justice require.</p> <p>d. The court may affirm the decision of the school board or may reverse or modify the decision. The decision of the court shall be rendered not later than 15 days from the date of the conclusion of the court's hearing.</p>

Current section number	Proposed new section number, if applicable	Current requirements with proposed change and rationale
<p>8VAC20-90-60. Dispute resolution.</p> <p>8VAC20-90-70. Procedure for dismissals</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Part III Procedure for Dismissals or Placing on Probation</p> <p>8VAC20-90-60. Dispute resolution. This Part III of the Procedure for Adjusting Grievances adopted by the Board of Education in accordance with the statutory mandate of Article 3 (§ 22.1-306 et seq.) of Chapter 15 of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia and the Standards of Quality for school divisions, Chapter 13.1 (§ 22.1-253.13:1 et seq.) of Title 22.1 of the Code of Virginia, is to provide an orderly procedure for the expeditious resolution of disputes involving the dismissal or placing on probation of any teacher.</p> <p>8VAC20-90-70. Procedure for dismissals or placing on probation. A. Notice to teacher of recommendation for dismissal or placing on probation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the event a division superintendent determines to recommend dismissal of any teacher, or the placing on probation of a teacher on continuing contract, written notice shall be sent to the teacher on forms to be prescribed by the Board of Education notifying him of the proposed dismissal, or placing on probation, and informing the teacher that within 45 <u>10</u> business days after receiving the notice, the teacher may request a hearing before the school board, or before a fact-finding panel as hereinafter set forth <u>or, at the option of the school board, a hearing officer appointed by the school board, as provided in § 22.1-311 of the Code of Virginia.</u> 2. During such 45-day <u>10-business-day</u> period and thereafter until a hearing is held in accordance with the provisions herein, if one is requested by the teacher, the merits of the recommendation of the division superintendent shall not be considered, discussed, or acted upon by the school board except as provided for herein. 3. At the request of the teacher, the superintendent shall provide the reasons for the recommendation in writing or, if the teacher prefers, in a personal interview. In the event a teacher requests a hearing pursuant to § 22.1-311 or § 22.1-312 of the Code of Virginia, the division superintendent shall provide, within 10 days of the request, the teacher, or his representative, with the opportunity to inspect and copy his personnel file and all other documents relied upon in reaching the decision to recommend dismissal or probation. Within 10 days of the request of the division superintendent, the teacher, or his representative, shall provide the division superintendent with the opportunity to inspect and copy the documents to be offered in rebuttal to the decision to recommend dismissal or probation. The division superintendent and the teacher or his representative shall be under a continuing duty to disclose and produce any additional documents identified later that may be used in the respective parties' cases-in-chief. The cost of copying such documents shall be paid by the requesting party. 4. <u>Upon a timely request for a hearing, the school board or, at the school board's option, a hearing officer appointed by the school board shall set a hearing within 15 days of the request and the teacher shall be given at least five days' written notice of the time and the place of the hearing.</u> <p>B. Fact-finding panel. Within 15 days after the teacher receives the notice referred to in subdivision A 4 of this section, either the teacher, or the school board, by written notice to the other party upon a form to be</p>

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		<p>prescribed by the Board of Education, may elect to have a hearing before a fact-finding panel prior to any decision by the school board.</p> <p>1. Panel. Within five business days after the receipt by the division superintendent of the request for a fact-finding panel, the teacher and the division superintendent shall each select one panel member from among the employees of the school division other than an individual involved in the recommendation of dismissal or placing on probation as a supervisor, witness, or representative. The two panel members so selected shall within five business days of their selection select a third impartial panel member.</p> <p>2. Selection of impartial third member. In the event that both panel members are unable to agree upon a third panel member within five business days, both members of the panel shall request the chief judge of the circuit court having jurisdiction of the school division to furnish a list of five qualified and impartial individuals from which list one individual shall be selected by the two members of the panel as the third member. The individuals named by the chief judge may reside either within or without the jurisdiction of the circuit court, be residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and in all cases shall possess some knowledge and expertise in public education and education law, and shall be deemed by the judge capable of presiding over an administrative hearing. Within five business days after receipt by the two panel members of the list of fact finders nominated by the chief judge, the panel members shall meet to select the third panel member. Selection shall be made by the panel members alternately deleting names from the list until only one remains with the panel member selected by the teacher to make the first deletion. The third impartial panel member shall chair the panel. No elected official shall serve as a panel member. Panel members shall not be parties to, or witnesses to, the matter grieved. With the agreement of the teacher's and division superintendent's panel members, the impartial panel member shall have the authority to conduct the hearing and make recommendations as set forth herein while acting as a hearing officer.</p> <p>The Attorney General shall represent personally or through one of his assistants any third impartial panel member who shall be made a defendant in any civil action arising out of any matter connected with his duties as a panel member. If, in the opinion of the Attorney General, it is impracticable or uneconomical for such legal representation to be rendered by him or one of his assistants, he may employ special counsel for this purpose, whose compensation shall be fixed by the Attorney General and be paid out of the funds appropriated for the administration of the Department of Education.</p> <p>3. Holding of hearing. The hearing shall be held by the panel within 30 calendar days from the date of the selection of the final panel member. The panel shall set the date, place, and time for the hearing and shall so notify the division superintendent and the teacher. The teacher and the division superintendent each may have present at the hearing and be represented at all stages by legal counsel or another representative.</p> <p>4. Procedure for fact-finding panel.</p> <p>a. The panel shall determine the propriety of attendance</p>

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		<p>at the hearing of persons not having a direct interest in the hearing, provided that, at the request of the teacher, the hearing shall be private.</p> <p>b. The panel may ask, at the beginning of the hearing, for statements from the division superintendent and the teacher (or their representative) clarifying the issues involved.</p> <p>c. The parties shall then present their claims and evidence. Witnesses may be questioned by the panel members, the teacher and the division superintendent. However, the panel may, at its discretion, vary this procedure but shall afford full and equal opportunity to all parties for presentation of any material or relevant evidence and shall afford the parties the right of cross-examination.</p> <p><u>B. Procedure for hearing.</u></p> <p><u>1. The hearing shall be conducted by the school board or, at the school board's option, a hearing officer appointed by the school board. The teacher and the division superintendent may be represented by legal counsel or other representatives. The hearing shall be private, unless the teacher requests a public hearing. The school board or hearing officer, as the case may be, shall establish the rules for the conduct of the hearing, and such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the division superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence, including the testimony of witnesses, and the right of all parties to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the school board or hearing officer.</u></p> <p>2. <u>2. The parties shall produce such additional evidence as the panel school board or hearing officer may deem necessary to an understanding and determination of the dispute. The panel school board or hearing officer shall determine the judge of relevancy and materiality of the evidence offered. All evidence shall be taken in the presence of the panel school board or hearing officer and of the parties.</u></p> <p>3. <u>3. Exhibits offered by the teacher or the division superintendent may be received in evidence by the panel school board or hearing officer and, when so received, shall be marked and made a part of the record.</u></p> <p>f. The facts found and recommendations made by the panel shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the panel members.</p> <p>g. The recommendations and findings of fact of the panel shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented to the panel at the hearing. No panel member shall conduct an independent investigation involving the matter grieved.</p> <p>h. The hearing may be reopened by the panel at any time before the panel's report is made upon its own motion or upon application of the teacher or the division superintendent for good cause shown to hear after-discovered evidence.</p> <p>i. The panel shall make a written report which shall include its findings of fact and recommendations and shall file it with the members of the school board, the division superintendent and the teacher, not later than 30 days after the completion of the hearing.</p>

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		<p>j. A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken. However, in proceedings concerning grievances not related to dismissal or probation, the recording may be dispensed with entirely by mutual consent of the parties. In such proceedings, if the recording is not dispensed with, the two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally; if either party requests a transcript, that party shall bear the expense of its preparation.</p> <p>In cases of dismissal or probation, a record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.</p> <p>5. Expenses.</p> <p>a. The teacher shall bear his own expenses. The school board shall bear the expenses of the division superintendent. The expenses of the panel shall be borne one half by the school board and one half by the teacher.</p> <p>b. The parties shall set the per diem rate of the panel. If the parties are unable to agree on the per diem, it shall be fixed by the chief judge of the circuit court. No employee of the school division shall receive such per diem for service on a panel during his normal business hours if he receives his normal salary for the period of such service.</p> <p>6. Right to further hearing. If the school board elects to have a hearing by a fact-finding panel on the dismissal or placing on probation of a teacher, the teacher shall have the right to a further hearing by the school board as provided in subsection C of this section. The school board shall have the right to require a further hearing as provided in subsection C also.</p> <p>7. Witnesses. Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.</p> <p>C. Hearing by school board.</p> <p>1. After receipt of the notice of pending dismissal or placing on probation described in subdivision A 1 of this section, the teacher may request a hearing before the school board by delivering written notice to the division superintendent within 15 days from the receipt of notice from the superintendent. Subsequent to the hearing by a fact-finding panel under subsection B of this section, the teacher, as permitted by subdivision B 6 of this section, or the school board may request a school board hearing by written notice to the opposing party and the division superintendent within 10 business days after the receipt by the party initiating such hearing of the findings of fact and recommendations made by the fact-finding panel and the transcript of the panel hearing. Such notice shall be provided upon a form to be prescribed by the Board of Education and shall specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board.</p> <p>2. In any case in which a further hearing is held by a school board after a hearing before the fact-finding panel, the school board shall consider at such further hearing the record, or</p>

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		<p>transcript, if any, the findings of fact and recommendations made by the fact finding panel and such further evidence, including, but not limited to, the testimony of those witnesses who have previously testified before the fact finding panel as the school board deems may be appropriate or as may be offered on behalf of the teacher or the superintendent.</p> <p>3. The school board hearing shall be set and conducted within 30 days of the receipt of the teacher's notice or the giving by the school board of its notice. The teacher shall be given at least 15 days written notice of the date, place, and time of the hearing and such notice shall also be provided to the division superintendent.</p> <p>4. The teacher and the division superintendent may be represented by legal counsel or other representatives. The hearing before the school board shall be private, unless the teacher requests a public hearing. The school board shall establish the rules for the conduct of any hearing before it, and such rules shall include the opportunity for the teacher and the division superintendent to make an opening statement and to present all material or relevant evidence including the testimony of witnesses and the right of all parties to cross-examine the witnesses. Witnesses may be questioned by the school board. The school board may hear a recommendation for dismissal and make a determination whether to make a recommendation to the Board of Education regarding the teacher's license at the same hearing or hold a separate hearing for each action.</p> <p>5. A record or recording of the proceedings shall be made and preserved for a period of six months. If either the teacher or the school board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The board shall bear the expense of the recording and the transcription.</p> <p>6. The school board shall give the teacher its written decision within 30 days after the completion of the hearing before the school board.</p> <p>7. The decision by the school board shall be based on the transcript, the findings of the fact and recommendations made by the fact finding panel, and any evidence relevant to the issues of the original grievance produced at the school board hearing in the presence of each party.</p> <p>The school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he or they represented a participant in the prior proceedings, the grievant, the grievant's attorney, or representative and, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board which has as its purpose reaching a decision on a grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative and the superintendent may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.</p> <p><u>4. A stenographic record or tape recording of the proceedings shall be taken. The two parties shall share the cost of the recording equally. The record or recording of the proceedings shall be preserved for a period of six months. If the school</u></p>

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		<p><u>board requests that a transcript of the record or recording be made at any time prior to expiration of the six-month period, it shall be made and copies shall be furnished to both parties. The school board shall bear the expense of the transcription.</u></p> <p><u>5. The teacher shall bear his own expenses. The school board shall bear the expenses of the division superintendent and the hearing officer.</u></p> <p><u>6. Witnesses who are employees of the school board shall be granted release time if the hearing is held during the school day. The hearing shall be held at the school in which most witnesses work, if feasible.</u></p> <p><u>7. In the event of a hearing conducted by a hearing officer, the recommendation of the hearing officer shall be based exclusively upon the evidence presented at the hearing. Upon the hearing officer's own motion or upon application by the teacher or the division superintendent, the hearing officer may reopen the hearing for the purpose of hearing after-discovered evidence upon a finding of good cause by the hearing officer at any time before his recommendation is due. The hearing officer shall transmit his written recommendation and a record or recording of the hearing to the school board as soon as practicable and no more than 10 business days after the hearing.</u></p> <p><u>8. In the event of a hearing by a hearing officer, the school board may make its decision upon the record or recording of such hearing or the school board may elect to conduct a further hearing to receive additional evidence. The school board must hold such further hearing as soon as practicable and must give written notice of the time and place of such further hearing to the division superintendent and the teacher within 10 business days after the board received the record or recording of the initial hearing. The notice must specify each matter to be inquired into by the school board. The school board shall determine the procedure to be followed at such further hearing.</u></p> <p><u>D. C. School board determination.</u></p> <p><u>1. In any case in which a hearing is held before a fact-finding panel but no further hearing before the school board is requested by either party, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision within 30 days after the school board receives both the transcript of such hearing and the panel's findings of the fact and recommendation. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the transcript, the findings of fact, and the recommendations made by the panel. In the event of a hearing before the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the evidence and information presented at the school board hearing.</u></p> <p><u>2. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer followed by a further hearing by the school board pursuant to subdivision B 8 of this section, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after such further hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the initial hearing, the recommendations of the hearing officer, and the evidence and information presented at</u></p>

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		<p><u>the further hearing before the school board.</u></p> <p><u>3. In the event of a hearing before a hearing officer in cases in which no further hearing is conducted by the school board, the school board shall give the teacher its written decision as soon as practicable and no more than 30 days after receiving the record or recording of the hearing. The decision of the school board shall be reached after considering the record or recording of the hearing and the recommendations of the hearing officer.</u></p> <p>2- 4. <u>The school board may dismiss, or suspend, or place on probation a teacher upon a majority vote of a quorum of the school board. In the event the school board's decision is at variance with the recommendation of the fact-finding panel, the school board shall be required to conduct an additional hearing, which shall be public unless the teacher requests a private one. However, if the fact-finding hearing was held in private, the additional hearing shall be held in private. The hearing shall be conducted by the school board pursuant to subdivisions C 1 and 2 of this section, except that the grievant and the division superintendent shall be allowed to appear, to be represented, and to give testimony. However, the additional hearing shall not include examination and cross-examination of any other witnesses. The school board's written decision shall include the rationale for the decision. The school board's attorney, assistants, or representative, if he or they represented a participant in the prior proceedings; the grievant; the grievant's attorney or representative; and, notwithstanding the provisions of § 22.1-69 of the Code of Virginia, the superintendent shall be excluded from any executive session of the school board that has as its purpose reaching a decision on a grievance. However, immediately after a decision has been made and publicly announced, as in favor of or not in favor of the grievant, the school board's attorney or representative and the superintendent may join the school board in executive session to assist in the writing of the decision.</u></p> <p>FORMS (8VAC20-90)</p> <p>Statement of Grievance, eff. 2/05</p> <p>Principal's Decision, eff. 2/05</p> <p>Superintendent's Level, eff. 2/05</p> <p>Request for Hearing (Decision to be Presented to Grievant), eff. 2/05</p> <p>Notice of Proposed Dismissal or Proposed Placing on Probation, eff. 2/05</p> <p>Request for Hearing (to be submitted to Superintendent), eff. 2/05.</p> <p>Statement of Grievance (undated, filed 11/2015)</p> <p>Principal's Decision (undated, filed 11/2015)</p> <p>Superintendent's Decision (undated, filed 11/2015)</p> <p>Request for Hearing (undated, filed 11/2015)</p> <p>Notice of Proposed Dismissal (undated, filed 11/2015)</p>