

MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
School and Division Accountability Committee
September 26, 2006

James Monroe Building
Jefferson Meeting Room, 22nd Floor
Richmond, Virginia
1:00-3:00

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. by David L. Johnson, chair. The following Board of Education members were present: Dr. Emblidge, Mrs. Saslaw, Dr. Brewster, and Mr. Moore. Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr., superintendent of public instruction, was also present to assist the committee in its work.

Purpose of the Committee

Mr. Johnson's first order of business was to recognize Dr. Mark Emblidge, to make opening comments. Dr. Emblidge noted that the purpose of the Committee on School and Division Accountability is to study chronically low-performing schools and school divisions and make recommendations on increasing accountability for effective instruction and achievement.

Mr. Johnson added that the committee initially will focus on schools that lose state accreditation because of low student achievement and schools and divisions that have yet to meet annual benchmarks in reading and mathematics under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB).

Overview of the Current System of Support

This report consisted of three parts, as follows:

1. Statewide system of support:
Dr. Linda Wallinger, assistant superintendent for instruction, outlined the major components of the statewide system of support for public schools:
 - Standards and Instructional Resources:
 - SOL Curriculum Frameworks/Enhanced Scope and Sequence/Pacing Guides
 - SOL Instructional Modules/LEP and Special Education Differentiation Strategies
 - CTE Competencies Aligned with Industry
 - Standards and SOL
 - State-Adopted Instructional Materials
 - Technology Integration Resources

- Assessments and Data-Driven Decision Making
 - SOL Assessments and Web-based Technology Initiative
 - Educational Information Management System
 - Education Data Partnerships and SchoolMatters Online Resource
 - Algebra Readiness Diagnostic Test
 - Phonological Awareness and Literacy Screening (PALS)
 - Industry Certification and Licensure Exams
 - Electronic Practice Assessment Tools (ePAT)
 - NCS Virginia Mentor (Writing)
 - Benchmark Assessments

- Instructional Support, Interventions and Acceleration
 - Governor's PASS Initiative
 - Academic Reviews (School and Division)
 - Early Reading Initiative and Reading First
 - VA Preschool Initiative
 - Algebra Readiness Intervention
 - K-3 Class size Funding
 - Project Graduation (Academies and Tutorials)
 - Targeted School Improvement Support (CSR, HSTW)
 - Board-Approved Instructional Models and Supplemental Service Providers
 - Turnaround Specialists
 - Training and Technical Assistance Centers (T/TAC)
 - Special Education State Improvement Grant/Capacity Building Grants
 - Special Education Instructional Support Team (IST) Initiative
 - Governor's Senior Year Plus Initiative (Early College Scholars and Virtual AP School)
 - Governor's Schools and Charter Schools

- Teacher Quality and Leadership Development
 - Teacher Quality Enhancement
 - HOUSSE Plan and Guidelines for High Quality Professional Development
 - Professional Development (Content and Differentiated Instructional Modules and Online Graduate Courses)
 - Turnaround Specialists
 - Teacher Recruitment in Hard-to-Staff Schools (The New Teacher Project)
 - Leadership Development (State Grants, SAELP II)
 - Electronic Recruitment Initiative (Spec. Ed.)
 - Mentor Teacher Programs
 - Statewide Job Bank and Electronic Hiring Hall

- Partnerships and Support Networks
 - Governor's PASS Initiative (AEL and Business Partners)
 - Southside VA NCLB Partnership and Technical Assistance Centers (T/TAC)
 - Jointly Operated Continuation Schools
 - Mathematics/Science Partnerships
 - VA Career Education Foundation
 - TNTP Grant
 - Distinguished Schools and Division Support
 - School/University Partnerships
 - Migrant Education Partnership Grant
 - Professional Organization Partnerships
 - Safe and Drug-Free Schools Partnerships

- Accountability for Results and Informed Parents
 - Standards of Quality
 - School Accreditation
 - Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
 - School, Division, and State Report Cards
 - Division Efficiency Reviews
 - Division and School Academic Reviews with
 - Federal and State Program Monitoring

2. The academic review process:

Kathleen Smith, director of school improvement programs, reported that there were 132 schools Accredited with Warning in 2005-2006. Ninety-four schools were assigned a school support team; 13 schools were identified for a Tier I review; 11 schools were identified for a Tier 2 review; and 14 schools were identified for a Tier 3 review. The tiers refer to the extent of the review, which is based on criteria set by the Board of Education.

For the 131 schools Accredited with Warning in 2005-2006, 92 were warned in English; 33 were warned in mathematics; 49 were warned in science; and 46 were warned in History/Social Sciences.

Twenty-eight schools received school support through either the Partnership for Achieving Successful Schools (PASS) initiative or Reading First. Twenty-three schools were assigned a PASS coach who served as the school support team leader. Five schools were assigned a Reading First coach from the Office of Elementary Instruction who served as the school support team leader.

3. Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) ratings:

Charles Pyle, director of communications, reported that Virginia and 73 percent of the commonwealth's public schools met or exceeded No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) achievement objectives during the 2005-2006 school year, according to preliminary information released today by the Virginia Department of Education.

It was the second consecutive year in which Virginia made what the federal law calls Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading and mathematics.
Review Process for Alternative Accreditation Plans for Special Purpose Schools
This report was given by Ms. Smith, who gave an overview of the process.

Standards of Accreditation Guidance Document

Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent of policy and communications, gave this report. Ms. Wescott explained that on November 30, 2000, the Board approved a guidance document, which provides additional detail concerning the interpretation and implementation of certain provisions in the accreditation standards. From time to time since then, the Board has approved additional guidance. Now that the revised accreditation regulations (adopted by the Board in May 2006) are in effect, the need exists to update this guidance and to compile it into one document. The update is needed to address:

- 1) Obsolete language in the current guidance documents;
- 2) Updates needed because Virginia's accountability system has matured; and
- 3) Technical assistance in the areas of consequences for those schools that fail to meet the accountability requirements.

In addition, the guidance document has also been edited for clarity and consolidates all guidance related to the accrediting standards into one comprehensive package.

Following a discussion of the major proposed changes, Mr. Johnson noted that the guidance document would be presented to the full Board of Education at its business meeting the next day (September 27) and that the document would be widely disseminated for public comment. The final document will be presented to the Board for adoption at the November 29th meeting.

Plan to identify provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) Not Integral to Virginia's Accountability System (HB 1427 and SB 410) and Status of the NCLB Waiver Requests (HB 1428)

Dr. Wallinger gave this report. House Bill (HB) 1427 and Senate Bill (SB) 410 directed the Board of Education to develop a plan to identify provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) that are not integral or necessary to the Commonwealth of Virginia's statewide educational program. The bills also requested that the Virginia Attorney General's office provide information related to the cost of noncompliance of certain provisions of NCLB. House Bill (HB) 1428 encouraged the Virginia Board of Education to request certain waivers and exemptions to the requirements of NCLB. In March 2006, the Board approved and submitted the waiver requests to the United States Department of Education (USED).

Dr. Wallinger explained that since the passage of NCLB, Virginia has been blending the requirements of NCLB with its accountability system. This alignment has created confusion among state and local administrators as well as the public. Schools that meet one accountability rating may not meet the other, leading to misperceptions about the quality of educational programs in Virginia's schools. The overall challenges Virginia

has faced in implementation of the legislation described in the report are summarized below.

- The testing policies and assessment instruments required for use with students with disabilities (SWD) and limited English proficient (LEP) students.
- The criteria for determining highly qualified teachers (HQT) and interpretation of the highly qualified criteria in the law.
- The criteria to identify schools and divisions for school improvement and the accompanying sanctions.
- The administrative burden that has been placed on the state and local school divisions in reporting the data requirements as specified under the law.

Dr. Wallinger then gave a brief overview of the status of Virginia's requests for waivers to certain provisions of NCLB.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Calculations proposed for the 2007-2008 School Year
Shelley Loving-Ryder, assistant superintendent for assessment and reporting, gave this report. NCLB requires all state educational agencies (SEA) to submit for approval to the United States Department of Education (USED) individual program applications or a consolidated state application. A major component of the consolidated application is Virginia's Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook that describes a single statewide accountability system for the Commonwealth. The policies and procedures that were used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) ratings for the 2006-2007 school year based on 2005-2006 assessment results are described in the amended workbook dated July 21, 2006.

Ms. Loving-Ryder presented amendments to Virginia's Accountability Workbook that address the following issues:

- Elimination of the SELP test as the state-approved assessment instrument to be used as a proxy for the SOL reading tests in grades 3 through 8 for LEP students at level 1 or 2 of English language proficiency;
- Removal of scores resulting from certain substitute tests from the calculation of AYP;
- Removal of scores resulting from Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program (VSEP) from the calculation of AYP; and
- Expansion of the Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA) to include LEP students at levels 1 and 2 of English language proficiency.

Ms. Loving-Ryder pointed out that the proposed amendments would affect the calculation of AYP for the 2007-2008 school year based on assessments administered in 2006-2007.

Following a discussion of the proposed amendments, Mr. Johnson noted that the proposed amendments will be presented to the full Board of Education for its consideration and adoption.

NCLB Monitoring Report of Highly Qualified Teachers and Virginia's Response to the U. S. Department of Education's Directive to Phase Out HOUSSE

Dr. Thomas Elliott, assistant superintendent for teacher education, licensure, and professional practice, Virginia is required to submit a revised plan in response to the issues addressed in the compliance monitoring letter. Dr. Elliott briefly reviewed the options proposed for high school special education teachers new to the profession to use to demonstrate subject-matter competency in the subject(s) they teach.

Mr. Johnson said that the full report and recommendations were reviewed by the Board of Education last month, and the final adoption of the recommendations was scheduled for the full board meeting on September 27.

Future Meeting Dates

Mr. Johnson said that future committee meetings will be announced and that most likely the meetings will be scheduled for the day prior to upcoming Board of Education meeting dates.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.