

MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
Standing Committee on the Standards of Quality (SOQ)
February 24, 2016
4:00 p.m.
Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building

Welcome and Opening Comments

Ms. Joan Wodiska called the meeting to order, acting as chair because Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr., Committee Chair could not be present. The following Board members were present: Ms. Diane T. Atkinson, Dr. Oktay Baysal, Mr. James H. Dillard, II, Mr. Daniel A. Gecker, Ms. Elizabeth V. Lodal and Mr. Sal Romero, Jr.

Dr. Stephen R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was also present.

Approval of Minutes of the January 27, 2016, Committee Meeting

Ms. Atkinson made a motion to approve the committee minutes of the October 21, 2015 meeting as drafted. Ms. Lodal seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Wodiska opened the floor to public comment. No individuals requested to address the committee.

Ms. Wodiska reviewed the meeting's purpose to receive an overview and discussion of Standards 1 and 4.

Discussion of *Standard One: Instructional programs supporting the Standards of Learning and other educational objectives* and *Standard Four: Student Achievement and graduation requirements*

Dr. Cynthia A. Cave, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications, presented an overview of Standard One and Standard Four of the Standards of Quality (SOQ). Her presentation is available on the committee's [webpage](#).

She explained that Standard One includes a preamble to the entire SOQ chapter, and that the Standard primarily focuses on what must be taught by local school divisions, including the Standards of Learning, specific subjects required, and remediation requirements.

Dr. Lodal asked whether the state provided full funding for summer remediation. Dr. Cave responded that the SOQ funding formula provides funds for remedial summer school for students who are subject to compulsory remediation - those who have failed to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades three through eight or who fail an end-of-course test required for a verified credit. At-Risk funds, which are not SOQ funds, may be used to fund remediation where it is not required by the SOQ.

Mr. Dillard inquired if all remediation occurs during summer school, and how the Department of Education ensures that remediation is provided. Dr. Staples replied that high school

remediation generally occurs during the school year, whereas in elementary and middle school such remediation is normally provided during the summer. Dr. Staples also indicated that compliance with all requirements of the SOQ, including the remediation requirement is self-certified by local school boards, and those that do not certify compliance must provide an improvement plan.

Ms. Atkinson noted that teacher staffing and licensure requirements are consistently difficult for certain school divisions to comply with, especially for particular content areas. Dr. Staples responded that failure to attain accreditation is the most often cited reason for noncompliance, followed by failing to meet staffing requirements. Dr. Staples indicated that VDOE historically has not been aggressive about following up with school divisions that have reported noncompliance with the SOQ, and that the agency is beginning an effort to reach out to school divisions and provide technical assistance as needed.

In response to a follow-up question from Mr. Dillard about remediation for high school students, Dr. Staples indicated that each school division determines how remediation is provided.

Ms. Lodal noted that the preamble included in Standard One clearly recognizes that quality education is dependent upon the commitment of adequate resources; however, new mandates are often placed upon school divisions without corresponding funding allocations.

Mr. Dillard commented that there has not been political will to raise taxes, which has reduced general fund resources available to public education.

Ms. Wodiska noted that Standard One describes linkages between the K-12 system, workforce needs and community colleges that are to be considered for career and technical education programs. She also asked whether intervention was required for K-3 students struggling in mathematics. Dr. Cave responded that it was not a requirement in the SOQ.

Ms. Wodiska also noted that Standard One requires notification of the availability of certain programs for students, and asked if the availability of career and technical education opportunities must be provided. Dr. Cave responded that such programs are required of all school divisions, but there is not a notification requirement.

Dr. Lodal noted that economics and personal finance skills are included in the SOQ, and the graduation requirement for a course in such subject limits flexibility available to local school divisions to spread the content throughout the curriculum.

Dr. Dillard noted the recent Joint Legislative Audit Review Commission report did not provide an estimate of the funding needs for public education as prior reports have.

Mr. Romero commented that additional time is needed with English language learners to ensure that they do not fall behind in other content areas.

Dr. Cave continued her presentation, explaining that Standard Four chiefly prescribes student achievement and graduation requirements.

Dr. Staples commented that there is an expectation for the SOQ to reflect actual practice in schools, and cited assistant principal positions an example of a gap that has grown between SOQ and actual practice: there are approximately 900 SOQ-funded assistant principals; however, there are about 2,700 assistant principals employed by local school divisions.

Ms. Lodal noted that the Board spends a significant amount of time reviewing the SOQ biennially, and inquired how its recommendations have had an impact. Dr. Cave cited as an example the Board's most recent SOQ review included a recommendation for Algebra Readiness to be included in the SOQ so that it would be consistently funded, and the General Assembly took corresponding action.

Ms. Wodiska encouraged members to submit any questions they may have to staff, so they can review them at the next meeting with the entire committee.

Mr. Gecker inquired if data was available for all staffing categories and if student outcomes could be linked to school divisions that exceed the SOQ staffing requirements. Dr. Staples responded that data for most staffing categories is available, and that linking the data as suggested is possible.

Ms. Wodiska noted that the committee requested amendments to the workplan to allow additional opportunities for public input, while completing the SOQ review in time to be considered in budget or General Assembly proposals. She stated that she would request Dr. Cannaday to consider the adoption of the SOQ workplan at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Atkinson discouraged delaying opportunities for public comment because the Board's report would be too late to influence the budget process.

Ms. Lodal expressed concern with delaying discussion on Standard Two because it generates the most interest and has the greatest impact.

At 5:00 P.M., Ms. Wodiska adjourned the meeting due to approaching severe weather.