

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: B.

Date: June 19, 2008

Topic: First Review of the Proposed Timeline for the 2008 Review of the Standards of Quality

Presenter: Ms. Anne D. Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications

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Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by
 State or federal law or regulation
 Board of Education regulation
 Other: _____

Action requested at this meeting Action requested at future meeting: _____

Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action
 Previous review/action
date _____
action _____

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

“Standards of quality for the several school divisions shall be determined and prescribed from time to time by the Board of Education, subject to revision only by the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall determine the manner in which funds are to be provided for the cost of maintaining an educational program meeting the prescribed standards of quality, and shall provide for the apportionment of the cost of such program between the Commonwealth and the local units of government comprising such school divisions. Each unit of local government shall provide its portion of such cost by local taxes or from other available funds.”

The *Code of Virginia* requires the Board of Education to review the Standards of Quality every two

years. Section 22.1-18.01 of the *Code* says, in part:

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

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

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

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

The Board of Education revised its bylaws in October 2001 to require the Board to “determine the need for a review of the SOQ from time to time but no less than once every two years. The Standing Committee on the Standards of Quality was created by resolution of the Board of Education in November 2001 and held its first meeting in January 2002.

The Board has made recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly, or has reaffirmed previous recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly, on June 25, 2003, November 17, 2004, October 26, 2005, November 29, 2006, and November 29, 2007.

Summary of Major Elements: The proposed timeline would include the following major actions:

July	SOQ Committee meeting	Review of the Standards of Quality Discussion of Board priorities
September	Board meeting	First review of the recommendations to the Governor and the 2009 General Assembly

October	Following the Board meeting	Public hearing on the recommendations
November	Board meeting	Final review and approval of the recommendations to the Governor and the 2009 General Assembly

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board waive first review and approve the timeline.

Impact on Resources: The impact on state funds for the review of the Standards of Quality is expected to be minimal and can be absorbed within current resources.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: Upon approval of the timeline, staff will begin preparations for the Standards of Quality review by the Board.