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## **President's Listening Tour Continues** ***Board of Education's Braunlich in Bedford September 8-9***

Virginia Board of Education President Christian N. Braunlich will travel to Bedford next week to hear from citizens about important issues facing the commonwealth's public schools including changes in the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment system. The public forum is the second event of an eight-stop listening tour of the commonwealth and is scheduled for Monday, September 8, at 6 p.m. at the Bedford Elementary School gymnasium. Braunlich, accompanied by board member and accountability committee chair Diane Atkinson, will give a brief presentation on the role of the Board of Education and its goals. Attendees will then have an opportunity to ask questions and make comments. The event is scheduled to conclude by 8 p.m.

The tour is designed to give parents, teachers, local school board members, administrators and other interested citizens an opportunity to express their views on public education, particularly on proposed [Guidelines for Alternative Assessments](#) the state board is required to implement in response to legislation approved by the 2014 General Assembly.

"The General Assembly eliminated several SOL tests and directed the Board of Education to develop guidelines to help school divisions develop local assessments to ensure that the content is still taught," Braunlich said. "Before voting on the guidelines later this month, the board wants to listen to the views of students, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members and other interested citizens on how divisions might balance flexibility and accountability in subjects and grades where there are no longer SOL exams."

On Monday afternoon, Bedford Superintendent Douglas R. Schuch will host elementary and middle school teachers at the school in a discussion of the new guidelines with Braunlich and Atkinson. On Tuesday, September 9, Braunlich and Atkinson will join division principals at the Bedford County Public Schools' administrative offices, before touring Body Camp Elementary and Forest Middle School.

Details of future stops on Braunlich's listening tour will be available on the [Virginia Department of Education website](#) as they are scheduled.

Article VIII of the Constitution of Virginia vests the Board of Education with primary responsibility for setting policies for the commonwealth's public schools, subject only to the authority of the General Assembly. This includes establishing curriculum and accountability standards for schools and licensure requirements for teachers, principals and other educators. The board reports annually to the governor and General Assembly on the conditions and needs of schools.

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