MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
Committee on School and Division Accountability
September 9, 2015
1:00 p.m.
Jefferson Conference Room; James Monroe Building

Welcome and Opening Comments

The following Board of Education (Board) members were present for the September 9, 2015 Committee on School and Division Accountability meeting: Diane Atkinson; Dr. Billy Cannaday, Jr.; Darla Edwards; Elizabeth Vickrey Lodal; Sal Romero, Jr; and Joan Wodiska. Dr. Steven Staples, the superintendent of public instruction, was also present.

Ms. Atkinson, chairman of the committee, convened the meeting and welcomed the Board members and guests. She noted that today's meeting would focus on the School Report Card and the revisions to the Standards of Accreditation (SOA).

Approval of Minutes from the July 22, 2015 Meeting

A technical change (correction in a name spelling) in the minutes was made, and the draft minutes were approved. Mr. Romero abstained since he was not present at the July 22 meeting.

Public Comment

Ms. Atkinson acknowledged the receipt of public comment from the VEA regarding the comprehensive revision of the SOA and the College Board regarding the redesign of the School Report Card. Those written comments were provided to the Board prior to today's meeting via email, and hard copies were available at the meeting. Although two people had signed up for public comment, they were not present.

Report from SOL Innovation Committee

Ms. Atkinson introduced the presenter for this agenda item, Dr. Jared A. Cotton, superintendent of Henry County Public Schools and chairman of the Assessment 2.0 Subcommittee.

Dr. Cotton said the Assessment 2.0 Subcommittee has accomplished much in a short amount of time, and he discussed the following:

- He said they have been focusing on assessment, which he stated is more than about multiple-choice.
- The subcommittee identified its purpose as follows: "Utilizing research and best practices related to assessment, the Assessment 2.0 Subcommittee will work collaboratively to develop recommendations for the future of assessment in

Virginia. The subcommittee will work to develop an assessment philosophy and model that supports effective teaching and learning in Virginia's classrooms."

- They also looked at what kind of skills they want graduates to possess when they leave Virginia's schools.
- They talked about what they want to measure:
  - Literacy and numeracy at the elementary and middle school level
  - Reading for different purposes
  - Oral and written communication skills
  - Civic responsibility
  - Scientific literacy and the scientific process
  - Collaborative and social skills
  - Self-awareness
  - Critical thinking and problem solving
  - Financial literacy
  - Ability to solve real-world problems
  - De-emphasis on "Google-able" content
  - Ability to create new ideas and solutions
  - Life-ready skills
  - Ability to identify accuracy and bias
  - Ability to "curate" available information
- They then started to work on design principles and what must be a part of the new system. They determined that the following must be included:
  - Population
  - Amount of testing
  - Local flexibility
  - Assessment format
  - Equity
  - Teacher involvement
  - Assessed content
  - Timing of the test
  - Student growth
  - High school flexibility
  - Developmental appropriateness and test development
  - Scoring
  - Reporting of test results
- The subcommittee will continue to add to the design principles as they move forward.
- He also pointed to the glossary of assessment terms developed by the group. He said they spent some time on this to ensure consistency in the use of terms and will continue to update this glossary as the work progresses.
- In addition, he discussed a proposed assessment model for pre-K through graduation.
- He finished his presentation by discussing the tasks the subcommittee has completed. He also mentioned that there has been teacher and administrator involvement throughout the process.

At the end of this presentation, Ms. Atkinson recognized the deputy secretary of education, Jennie O'Holleran, who had joined the meeting.

Board members thanked Dr. Cotton for his work. Board discussion then followed.

Discussion of *Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA)*

Dr. Cynthia Cave, assistant superintendent for policy and communications for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE); Shelley Loving-Ryder, assistant superintendent for student assessment and school improvement (VDOE); and Dr. Billy Haun, chief academic officer and assistant superintendent for instruction (VDOE); led this agenda item discussion regarding the following topics:

- Preliminary Concepts for Comprehensive Review of the SOA
- Proposed Guidance for the Determination of the New Accreditation Rating: "Partially Accredited"
- Proposed Guidelines: Graduation Requirements; Local Alternative Paths to Standard Units of Credit (Alternative to the 140 Clock-Hour Requirements)

Dr. Cave introduced Dr. Haun who discussed two documents provided to the Board and posted to the committee's Web site. Dr. Haun said he could not have done any better than to follow Dr. Cotton because the ideas of what we value and what we want our graduates to look like are quite important. Dr. Haun and representatives of the agency's divisions have been building a profile of what a student should look like if they took all of the things that they valued for students as they become college and career ready.

The group started working with the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) to look at some of these ideas. They asked this question: "What knowledge, skills, experiences, and qualities do the students need to possess when they leave the schools ready to be successful in college and careers?" There are 37 states with a definition for college and career readiness. Out of those 37, only 33 have a single definition for the term rather than two separate definitions. Twenty-one state definitions actually mention concrete skills and dispositions students must demonstrate. He then went through the areas required by these states: academic knowledge; critical thinking and/or problem solving; social and emotional learning and collaboration and communication; grit, resilience, and perseverance; and citizenship or community involvement. The group has identified four different domains with simple names: content knowledge, workplace skills, community, and career pathways, but he said they found that there is a cross-over with all of them.

Board discussion followed with comments also provided by Dr. Staples, Dr. Haun, and Dr. Cave. Board members said they may have several retreats to look at these issues and thanked Dr. Haun for his work.

Dr. Cave then introduced Shelley Loving-Ryder who talked about graduation requirements. Ms. Loving-Ryder said they might also want to think about the content knowledge differently and move away from credit requirements to think more specifically about competencies that are required for student success in career or post-secondary

education. She then discussed the examples provided to the Board in a handout. Dr. Staples followed up with comments. He said there has been discussion with staff about these issues, but they wanted to present this to the Board for reaction and potential further development.

Board discussion followed, with thanks for the recommendations. One Board member said she could see how the two presentations come together. It was also acknowledged that Virginia is one of few states without a P-16 Council or a similar organization. Thus, there is no organization coordinating needs from Pre-K through college/university level.

Ms. Loving-Ryder then went on with the discussion. She said the next concept adds to the previous discussion of adding non-academic indicators to the accreditation process. One option is to consider them as part of an overall rating. She said one of the examples Dr. Cotton used was school climate.   As the Board considers these other indicators, she is hoping that they will consider how they will be presented. She then discussed possible options for the Board's consideration and asked for Board guidance. More Board discussion followed and Dr. Staples also provided comments. A Board member mentioned the document referencing state exemplars regarding graduation and accountability. Ms. Atkinson said that information was provided as background information and is on the Web site, but would not be presented today.

The Board then moved to discussion of two 2015 *Code of Virginia* changes made through current fast track regulatory action for the SOA. Both of these items are before the Board for action on September 10, 2015. Ms. Loving-Ryder led the first discussion about the guidance for the new accreditation ratings for the "Partially Accredited category," provided examples of what the categories would look like, and discussed proposed guidance found in the boilerplate for Agenda Item F. scheduled to be discussed at the September 10 Board meeting the next day. She said the guidance explained the criteria that would be used.   Her presentation was followed by Board discussion. Dr. Staples also provided comment. Dr. Haun then led the final presentation under this agenda item regarding the other change in the *Code of Virginia* and the SOA regarding 140 clock-hours. He said staff conducted a review of policies in other states and looked at current department documents. The legislation allows a school division to waive the 140 clock-hour requirement when Board of Education criteria are met. The waiver option is for standard credit only and applies to all secondary courses, including Career and Technical Education courses, as applicable. School boards that exercise the waiver must have approved local policies in place. Local school board policies must ensure quality in rigor equal to programs having 140 clock-hours and must maintain and have available to the Board of Education proof of such. State guidelines should be thorough, but not restrictive. He said the draft guidelines are in two sections: local school board policy requirements and a description of three general pathways and policy implications for attaining the waiver. School divisions will be asked to provide information about their use of the 140 clock-hour requirement waiver as part of the annual *Data Collection Report: Standards of Quality and other Requirements*. He then reviewed the guidelines and Board discussion followed. Dr. Staples also provided comments. In response to Board comments, Dr.

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Staples said he would meet with Ms. Loving-Ryder and Dr. Haun for more discussion in order to provide additional information.

Discussion of School Performance Report Card Redesign

Charles Pyle, director of the office of communications (VDOE), and Dr. Jennifer Piver-Renna, senior executive director for research (VDOE), were the presenters for this agenda item which included a report on the School Performance Report Card survey and a presentation on the Report Card schematic.

Dr. Piver-Renna provided an overview of the report and the main findings on the School Performance Report Card survey. At the Board's request, a survey was designed to capture the public's opinion of the most important components, functions, and elements of a School Report Card. The goal was to reach a broad audience. She said the Web-based survey was available from July 15 through August 14, 2015. VDOE received 21,133 responses to the survey during that one-month period. Parents represented the highest percentage of survey respondents (66%), followed by educators, school board members, or school administrators (26%).

Survey respondents identified student outcomes, including graduation and readiness for college and the workforce, as the most important component of a School Report Card. Second was information on curriculum and instruction and teacher quality was third. Level of parental involvement and school finances were rated as least important. However, this does not mean that these elements were not important, but they were not as important as some of the others. Proposed content for the redesigned Report Card generally aligns with respondents' information needs identified through the survey. Seventy-five percent of existing or proposed Report Card and "snapshot" elements are similar to the content survey respondents rated as being of highest importance. The next phase of the Report Card design should incorporate additional curriculum and instruction and teacher quality elements on the Report Card "snapshot," facilitate access to additional data, and develop elements to capture parental involvement.

Board discussion followed.

Mr. Pyle then provided a progress report on the redesign of the School Performance Report Card. Since the Board met in July, he said members of the staff have been in conversation on a weekly basis with the development team regarding a number of issues. The first work product was shared with the Board. Mr. Pyle explained that the product he was sharing is called a wire frame, a term used in the Web design and Web development world – a schematic or a skeletal framework that provides a basic blueprint in terms of how information might be organized. He then discussed the proposed access page and pointed out the features on that page. He then took them through an example of information available for an example school, George Washington High School. He pointed out the tabs available for information about the school and other information available. He then said the design would be further fleshed out as the group moves forward and the Report Card would be designed for the sharing of information.

Board discussion followed and suggestions were made regarding additional information to be included.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Ms. Atkinson expressed her appreciation for the work that has been done. The meeting then adjourned at 5:23 p.m.