

**MINUTES**  
**Virginia Board of Education**  
**Committee on School and Division Accountability**  
**Wednesday, February 24, 2016**  
**12:00 p.m. (noon)**  
**Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building**  
**101. N. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Richmond VA 23219**

**Welcome and Opening Comments**

Mrs. Diane T. Atkinson, committee chair, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. (noon). The following members participated in the meeting: Mr. James Dillard, Mrs. Joan E. Wodiska, Mr. Sal Romero, Jr., Dr. Oktay Baysal, Mrs. Elizabeth Lodal, and Mr. Daniel Gecker. Dr. Stephen R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was also present.

Mrs. Atkinson summarized the committee's agenda.

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

Mrs. Lodal made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016, meeting of the committee on school and division accountability. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dillard and carried unanimously. Copies of the minutes had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

***Discussion of Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accreditation Public Schools in Virginia***

Dr. Billy Haun, Chief Academic Officer and Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, presented information on high school graduation requirements of other states, with a particular focus on Rhode Island, Oregon, and Hawaii. Dr. Haun went on to describe the proposal for the Virginia Diploma. Dr. Haun's presentations are available on the [Committee on School and Division Accountability Web page](#):

- [High School Diploma Information by State](#)
- ["Profile of a Graduate" Proposal](#)

Dr. Haun noted the diversity among states related to graduation requirements. Only seven states offered two diplomas, but several states offered diploma recognitions, distinctions, or pathways. Forty-two states have one diploma, seven have two diplomas, and one has three diplomas. Seventeen states have some type of exit or graduation assessment. Mrs. Atkinson asked for clarification on the type of assessment required. Dr. Haun noted that most states require multiple assessments around mathematics, reading, and writing.

Dr. Haun then focused on Rhode Island, Oregon, and Hawaii. He noted that for most states this is a work in progress, and outcome data is limited. Rhode Island, Oregon and Hawaii are implementing pieces that are similar to the concepts being discussed by the Board – i.e. Rhode Island's performance assessment graduation requirement, Oregon's essential skills graduation requirement, and Hawaii's civic responsibilities component and personal transition plan.

Mrs. Atkinson asked how long the policies of Rhode Island, Oregon, and Hawaii been in place. Dr. Haun noted they are all in progress. Mr. Gecker asked about performance measures to track progress towards their goals. Dr. Haun noted there is no data yet.

Dr. Staples indicated that if the Board made these types of revisions to the Standards of Accreditation they would not go into effect until the incoming ninth grade class of 2018 (graduating class of 2022).

Dr. Haun described Rhode Island's goals and graduation requirements. Mrs. Lodal asked about their National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results. Dr. Staples provided the results. Mrs. Atkinson asked if the state articulates how proficiency is demonstrated, and if it is a state administered assessment. Dr. Haun noted that the state sets minimum expectations, and there is a state test, unless the state has approved a local test. Dr. Haun noted that the two performance assessments are chosen by the school or district. Mrs. Atkinson asked what the state's involvement in the performance assessment entails. Mr. Dillard expressed concern about the quality of performance assessment chosen locally.

Dr. Staples noted the difference between Rhode Island and Virginia in terms of the ability to implement because of the size of the population. He noted the changes may need to be piloted regionally before they are rolled out statewide.

Mrs. Lodal indicated that a number of schools, including the Governor's Schools, are already doing this in Virginia.

Dr. Haun discussed Oregon's requirement for demonstrating proficiency in nine essential skills which are cross-disciplinary. There is a detailed manual provided by the Oregon Department of Education about how schools measure the essential skills. Oregon also requires students to meet personalized learning requirements, including an education plan and profile, and career-related learning experiences. Mrs. Atkinson asked when the plan is developed, and if the state spot checks the essential skills assessment. Dr. Cave noted her discussion with a policy analyst in Oregon, and that they are still developing guidance for all the essential skills.

Mr. Romero indicated he would like to see outcome data. Mrs. Lodal asked about the size of Oregon. Oregon has approximately 570,000 students. Mr. Dillard asked about how Oregon measures "demonstrating global literacy."

Dr. Haun discussed Hawaii's "general learner outcomes" and personal transition plan.

Mrs. Wodiska asked why Rhode Island, Oregon, and Hawaii were selected since there is no outcome data for those states. Mrs. Wodiska noted that North Carolina and Georgia have proven track records and staff may want to explore those states. Mrs. Wodiska also noted California's unified system between k-12 and higher education. She reiterated the importance of looking at the most effective programs and suggested utilizing organizations like the Council of Chief State School Officers for further research opportunities. Dr. Haun noted a recent report by the Education Commission of the States which reported that "of the 47 states with high school

graduation requirements, 18 states have complete or partial alignment between those requirements and statewide higher education minimum admission requirements.”

Mrs. Atkinson requested more information about when other states start personalized plans for students, when those plans are revised, and when students are exposed to career opportunities.

Mr. Gecker asked how the proposed changes will impact the classroom. Dr. Staples noted that any changes to graduation requirements will impact how schools operate and are organized. Dr. Staples noted the proposed Governor’s school in Hanover will be a good model for the experiential learning the Board has been discussing. Mrs. Atkinson reiterated the significant implications of the changes being discussed by the Board. Dr. Staples noted that many states are working in the same direction as Virginia, but there are no states out front with data yet.

Dr. Staples summarized some data points from the [Rapid Data Review](#) briefing.

- Nearly 70 percent of students graduating from a Virginia high school in 2008 with an Advanced Studies Diploma enrolled in a 4-year institution of higher education (IHE). After four years, 64.4 percent were still enrolled.
- Among Virginia students earning a Standard Diploma in 2008, 17.5 percent enrolled in a 4-year IHE. Four years later, 12.8 percent were still enrolled.
- Standard Diploma-earners are more likely to enroll in a 2-year IHE than their Advanced Studies Diploma-earning peers (32.2 percent to 18.9 percent, respectively). However, persistence among both groups is poor. After 4 years, only a third of Standard Diploma-earners and half of Advanced Studies Diploma-earners remained enrolled or earned a college credential.
- More than one-third (37.9 percent) of Advanced Studies Diploma-earners also earned a bachelor’s degree within 4 years of entering an IHE compared to only 3.2 percent of their Standard Diploma-earning peers.
- More Advanced Studies Diploma recipients also earned their associate’s degree (8.3 percent) than their Standard Diploma-earning peers (4.4 percent).
- Among Advanced Studies Diploma-earners, 14 percent scoring “Pass/Proficient” or “Advanced/Proficient” on the mathematics SOL assessment enrolled in a developmental mathematics course.
- Similarly, 18% of Advanced Studies Diploma-earners scoring “Pass/Proficient” or “Advanced/Proficient” on the English SOL assessment enrolled in a developmental English course.
- For students earning the Standard Diploma, 65 percent who scored at the “Pass/Proficient” or “Advanced/Proficient” level on the mathematics SOL assessment enrolled in a developmental mathematics course.
- Slightly fewer Standard Diploma-earners (60 percent) scoring “Pass/Proficient” or “Advanced/Proficient” on the English SOL assessment enrolled in a developmental English course.
- Two out of three students graduate from a 4-year IHE with debt; the average college debt for Virginia students is \$35,609.

Mrs. Atkinson asked if it was known why students are not graduating in four years. Dr. Staples indicated the Department will engage the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to understand further. He added that college presidents often cite the challenges outside the classroom (self-regulation, independent living) as contributing factors.

Mrs. Lodal noted that the Board, along with higher education, must be concerned with these data points. She noted the challenge when states do not have P-20 councils to coordinate education policy. She indicated that the community college test to determine remediation needs should be given at the high school level.

Dr. Staples indicated that the Standard Diploma needs more significant review and redesign than the Advance Diploma. He noted that many high school graduates do not take mathematics courses after their sophomore year, and then they struggle on college placement exams. The Board may want to consider ways to ensure students stay engaged in mathematics. He noted the necessity to redesign, not just add more requirements. Mr. Dillard asked what would be pushed out of the diploma if more mathematics is required.

Dr. Haun further explained the Profile of a Graduate/Virginia Diploma proposal. Dr. Haun noted that credits potentially would no longer be tied to year-long courses. The new proposal moves applied knowledge and skills to the verified competencies section, as opposed to a standard credit. The following recommendations were presented by Dr. Haun:

- Requiring ALL students to maintain course content engagement in mathematics, science, English and history/social studies for all four years of high school
- Better aligning high school coursework with college entrance expectations for both two- and four-year institutions
- Maintaining the option of the current traditional program of studies for students seeking immediate enrollment at four-year institutions of higher education
- Refining options for students seeking immediate entrance to a two-year school or workforce employment
- Add competencies to graduation expectations to broaden the Profile and better ensure college and career readiness beyond academic expectations alone

Mrs. Wodiska expressed appreciation for the Board's and Department's engagement with partners in higher education and the business community. She also noted that if the goal is changed, the support system to help make the goal a reality also must change.

Mrs. Atkinson asked about the increase in standard credits from the Standard Diploma to the Virginia diploma and asked if enough teachers and courses would be in place to meet those expectations.

Dr. Haun noted that the economics and personal finance requirement needs to be better represented in the proposal. Mr. Dillard asked how the current requirement is being met. Dr. Staples indicated some students complete economics and personal finance through a traditional, stand-alone course, and others complete online options. Mr. Dillard expressed concern with the possibility that economics and personal finance may replace a course in social studies.

Mrs. Lodal asked about the current schedule for high schools. Dr. Haun noted that of 178 high schools, 61 percent are on a 7-period schedule, 35 percent are on an 8-period schedule, and 4 percent are on a 6-period schedule.

Dr. Haun provided some examples of what a diploma pathway could be for different students. The first two years could be core content areas, and the last two years could include multiple pathways based on student interests.

Mrs. Wodiska expressed interest in more experiential learning opportunities (internships, dual enrollment, experiences). Mrs. Lodal agreed and expressed support for competency exams for credit.

Mrs. Atkinson reiterated the importance of discussing the capacity of our schools to accomplish this proposal. She noted it would be helpful to understand how local alternative assessments are being implemented.

Mrs. Lodal asked about the status of the High School Innovation grants. Dr. Staples noted that the five grant winners will be presenting to the Board in April. Mrs. Wodiska expressed interest in hearing from the Governor's STEM Academies and Arlington Career Center.

Mrs. Lodal indicated that academic and career counseling must begin in middle school. Professional development for school counselors should be a priority.

Mr. Gecker asked if the proposal would do anything to address the achievement gap. Dr. Staples noted that the Standard Diploma is the lowest expectation for graduation. If the expectations increase for the Standard Diploma, then all schools will be driven to provide that to all students. Mrs. Lodal noted that the multiple pathways will reinvigorate what is going on in schools.

**Discussion of Annual Progress Report on Memoranda of Understanding for Alexandria City Public Schools, Henrico County Public Schools, Newport News City Public Schools, Norfolk City Public Schools, and Northampton County Public Schools as Required for Schools in Accreditation Denied Status**

Ms. Beverly Rabil, director of school improvement, presented this report.

The following schools are in *Accreditation Denied* status for 2015-2016 and are subject to actions prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education and affirmed through MOUs between the VBOE and the local school boards. State and federal accountability data for each school division were provided.

<b>Name of Division</b>	<b>Name of Schools in <i>Accreditation Denied</i> Status</b>
Alexandria City Public Schools	Jefferson-Houston Elementary School
Henrico County Public Schools	L. Douglas Wilder Middle School

Newport News City Public Schools	Newsome Park Elementary School
Newport News City Public Schools	Sedgefield Elementary School
Norfolk City Public Schools	Campostella Elementary School
Norfolk City Public Schools	Lake Taylor Middle School
Norfolk City Public Schools	Lindenwood Elementary School
Norfolk City Public Schools	William H. Ruffner Middle School
Northampton County Public Schools	Kiptopeke Elementary School

*Jefferson-Houston Elementary School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school has seen double digit gains in English, mathematics and science pass rates, and overall gains in all four content areas.

*L. Douglas Wilder Middle School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school made gains in all four content areas, including where they were already meeting benchmarks.

*Newsome Park Elementary School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school is under the leadership of a new principal, and has seen gains in three content areas.

*Sedgefield Elementary School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school is under new leadership, and has made double digit gains in all content areas.

*Campostella Elementary School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school has seen double digit (close to 20 percent) gains in all content areas.

*Lake Taylor Middle School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school made gains in all content areas, and met the benchmark in history for the first time.

*Lindenwood Elementary School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school is under the leadership of a new principal, and made gains in three of four content areas. There was a significant decline in science, where there was significant teacher turnover. The school has revised the instructional model.

*William H. Ruffner Middle School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school is under new leadership, and made gains in three areas.

Mrs. Atkinson asked about situations where a school was not warned in a particular subject area, but now is warned. Ms. Rabil noted the Office of School Improvement (OSI) met with the new superintendent and will be reviewing and evaluating data from a diagnostic meeting to move forward.

Dr. Staples reminded Board members that the SOL (tests and standards) changed over the course of this data.

### *Kiptopeke Elementary School*

Ms. Rabil noted the school made gains in all four content areas, and met three of four benchmarks.

Dr. Staples reiterated that the work OSI staff does is hard and slow, and the Department is staying engaged to ensure positive trends continue. He noted the importance of staying engaged with schools when they succeed; that the supports cannot be pulled out in one year.

Ms. Rabil noted that these schools are submitting quarterly reports on data including attendance, discipline, and teacher attendance. She noted some schools have essential actions related to Positive Behavior Supports, and all schools are involved in engagement initiatives at multiple levels.

### **Discussion of Annual Progress Report on Memoranda of Understanding for Franklin City Public Schools and Sussex County Public Schools as Required for Divisions under Division Level Review**

Ms. Beverly Rabil, director of school improvement, presented this report. Mrs. Shelley Loving-Ryder, assistant superintendent for student assessment and school improvement, noted that OSI staff visited these divisions to interview educators about the interventions that account for the growth witnessed. The Office of School Improvement will report back to the Board in March with more details.

### *Franklin City Public Schools*

S.P. Morton Elementary School saw double digit gains in all four content areas. Joseph P. King, Jr. Middle School saw gains in all four content areas and met benchmarks in three of four areas, and is close in reading. Franklin High School remained fully accredited.

### *Sussex County Public Schools*

Sussex Central Elementary School made double digit gains in all four content areas. The middle school made gains in all four content areas. The high school made gains in all four content areas and is now fully accredited. Ms. Rabil noted that the leadership in Sussex is hands on and interactive.

Mrs. Wodiska expressed concern that the accountability system does not recognize the progress that school divisions are making through hard work. Mrs. Loving-Ryder noted plans to have several superintendents participate in a roundtable presentation about what they have learned and to share best practices.

### **Public Comment**

Mrs. Atkinson opened the floor to individuals wishing to address the committee. There were no speakers during the public comment period.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.