

State Special Education Advisory Committee (SSEAC)
Meeting Minutes
September 18 – 20, 2013

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

Members present: Mr. Adam Amick, Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Ms. Christy Evanko, Ms. Jackie Fagan, Ms. Sandra Hermann, and Mr. Darren Minarik

Virginia Department of Education Representative Present: Dr. Suzanne Creasey

Ms. Jackie Fagan, chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Members of the current and nominated Executive Committee met to develop a draft of the Annual Report to the Virginia Board of Education. The group reviewed and discussed information from minutes of previous meetings to summarize and include in the report. A working draft, with suggested commendations and recommendations to be presented to the full committee, was developed following group discussions.

A motion was made by Ms. Sandra Hermann and seconded by Ms. Christy Evanko that the Executive Committee recommend that the SSEAC accept the summary information (pages one through six, up to the Commendations section). The motion passed unanimously.

At 8:30 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Sandra Hermann and seconded by Ms. Lori Jackson Black. The motion passed unanimously.

Thursday, September 19, 2013

Members Present: Ms. Eva Aikins, Mr. Adam Amick, Ms. Paula Baker, Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Ms. Cynthia Bauer, Ms. Jusolyn Bradshaw, Mr. Jack Brandt, Ms. Christie Evanko, Ms. Jackie Fagan, Mr. Brendan Folmar, Ms. Fran Goforth, Ms. Sandra Hermann, Dr. Scott Kizner, Ms. Alison MacArthur, Mr. Darren Minarik, Ms. Frederique Vincent, Ms. Jacqui Wilsonde

Members Absent: Ms. Kathryn Hayfield, Ms. Erica Midboe

Ex-officio Members Present: Ms. Suzanne Bowers (PEATC); Ms. Heidi Lawyer (VBPD)

Virginia Department of Education Representatives Present: Mr. John Eisenberg, Dr. Suzanne Creasey, Ms. Pat Haymes, Ms. Samantha Hollins, Mr. Jeff Phenicie

Call to Order

Ms. Jackie Fagan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. Committee members introduced themselves.

Business Session

Members were asked to make changes/corrections to the private contact list.

Approval of Agenda

The committee was directed to review the agenda. A proposal to move the Assistant Superintendent's Report to either later in the afternoon or to the next morning was suggested by Jackie Fagan, due to Mr. Eisenberg's unavoidable delayed arrival. A motion by Ms. Lori Jackson Black and seconded by Ms. Fran Goforth to move the report to Friday morning passed by a majority vote. Ms. Sandra Herman opposed the motion. Ms. Goforth then made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Scott Kizner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

An electronic copy of the July meeting minutes was sent to the committee prior to the meeting. Ms. Christy Evanko made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Lori Jackson Black seconded. The motion was passed by a majority. Mr. Adam Amick abstained due to his absence at the previous meeting. The minutes were approved.

Report on Follow-up to Public Comment from Previous Meeting

Two public comments were made at the July meeting and responses were sent as follows:

1. A parent from Norfolk who is having problems with the school division was sent a letter on behalf of the SSEAC thanking her for her comment and assuring her that her comments, along with others, will be used in determining future recommendations to the Board of Education. Also included was information regarding dispute resolution options.
2. In response to a constituent's concern regarding the potential for fraud in Medicaid billing and the use of federal special education funding for services not rendered, a letter was sent on behalf of the SSEAC thanking her for her public comment and advising her that her comments along with others will be useful in determining future recommendations to the Board of Education. She was also advised that the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services should be contacted regarding suspected fraud. The letter also explained that special education funding is based on a percentage of services in the IEP and not directly for individual services provided.

Election of Officers for 2013 to 2015

The Nominating Committee - Ms. Christy Evanko, Ms. Eva Aikins, Mr. Darren Minarik, and Ms. Lori Jackson Black - submitted the following slate of nominations for office:

- Chair – Ms. Lori Jackson Black
- Vice Chair – Mr. Darren Minarik
- Secretary – Ms. Christy Evanko
- At Large – Ms. Sandra Hermann, Mr. Adam Amick, and Ms. Erica Midboe.

No nominations were submitted from the floor.

A motion by Dr. Scott Kizner and seconded by Ms. Fran Goforth to approve the nominations passed unanimously. Ms. Lori Jackson Black assumed the role of Chair.

Subcommittee Assignments

Subcommittee assignments were presented. The following changes in assignments were recognized: Mr. Adam Amick will chair the Policy and Regulations Subcommittee; Ms. Jackie Fagan will no longer serve on the Achievement Subcommittee but will instead serve on the Policy and Regulations Subcommittee.

Annual Report Presentation

The draft working report created by the Executive Committee the previous evening was distributed. Executive Committee members presented and answered questions regarding the report. They explained that the first six pages (prior to the Commendations Section) are summaries of information garnered from the minutes. The motion by the Executive Committee on Wednesday to accept the summary information was read. After discussion, minor changes were made to the information. A motion was made by Ms. Sandra Hermann and seconded by Mr. Adam Amick to accept the first six pages of the draft report prior to the Commendations Section as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Members divided into subcommittees to discuss the Commendations and Recommendations Sections of the draft annual report. Discussions continued during a working lunch. The committee returned at 1:00 p.m. for Public Comment.

Public Comment

A comment was read by Dr. Suzanne Creasey from a parent of a student with low vision and multiple disabilities who is concerned that the student is not able to participate in expedited Standards of Learning (SOL) testing retakes because her score is not received in a timely manner. Additionally, she expressed concerns that if a student is moving from the Modified Standard Diploma track to attempt the Standard Diploma, parents are not being informed that SOL tests must be retaken. Finally, there are concerns that students who need additional adult support are not able to access after school supplementary educational supports.

Another comment was read from the TASK (Taking Action for Special Kids) organization regarding the informational Web sites, specifically in regions 6 and 7. The comment stated that these Web sites are not easy to access and that there is only limited information about the local SEACs available.

Annual Report Presentation - continued

Each subcommittee shared its comments and suggestions regarding the draft commendations and recommendations. Changes were made in both the Commendations and Recommendations Sections based on the subcommittee and full committee discussions. Those changes were made and included in the final draft document.

The draft document was distributed and it was decided that a final vote would be made during the Friday session.

Constituency Reports

Name	Report
<p>Ms. Eva Aikins <i>Parent Representative, Region 6</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People remain concerned about funding in Region 6. There is a new autism research center in Danville with a director who has a lot of experience.
<p>Mr. Adam Amick <i>People with Disabilities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Say YES to College program is ending. The T/TAC at The College of William and Mary had to end support of the program in May 2013, so Old Dominion University has been administering the program alone. Mentors have expressed concern over the program. This may also be the last year that the Transition Conference takes place.
<p>Ms. Paula Baker <i>Parent Representative, Region 8</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Report
<p>Ms. Cynthia Bauer <i>Foster Care (Department of Social Services)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate Bill 960, which was passed in the 2013 General Assembly, enacted <i>Code of Virginia</i> changes pertaining to the enrollment of children living in a “kinship care arrangement.” The <i>Code</i> change permits the kinship caregiver to enroll the child in the school division where the kinship caregiver resides even though the caregiver has not assumed legal custody. Kinship care is defined under §63.2-100 as “the full-time care, nurturing, and protection of children by relatives.” The intention of this legislation was to facilitate the enrollment of children who were temporarily residing with a relative as a result of DSS involvement and the family’s development of a diversion arrangement to ensure the safety and appropriate care for the child. <p style="margin-left: 40px;">It was brought to the attention of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) that some school divisions have enacted local policy through which all individuals identifying themselves as “kinship care providers” when attempting to enroll children, are being referred to the local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) for a letter of verification. This has created confusion since localities are requiring this even for those families covered under military protocols that have been established for quite some time.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Guidance was provided to LDSS that for cases where the LDSS is involved and has knowledge of a temporary kinship care arrangement and is in agreement that the arrangement is necessary, the LDSS should, upon request of</p>

Name	Report
	<p>the kinship caregiver or with written consent and upon request of the local school division, provide a letter on LDSS letterhead indicating 1) that the arrangement meets the definition of kinship care; 2) that the parents are not able to care for the child and 3) the kinship care arrangement is not solely for the purposes of school enrollment. The letter should be dated as the school may request re-verification if the kinship care arrangement last longer than one year.</p> <p>If the family is not known to the LDSS, the LDSS has no legal authority to intervene solely for the purposes of school enrollment and is not obliged by <i>Code</i> to provide this verification. The law does not require LDSS to investigate kinship situations. If the family is not known to the LDSS and the kinship care arrangement is one for which the LDSS has no knowledge, then the LDSS may decline to provide the verification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virginia’s second review of the federal Title IV-E requirements was held. The final report has not been received from the federal government. • The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTC) federal review was held. Virginia volunteered for this review to assist the federal government in designing its required state-level foster care review process. The review is conducted for youth at 17, 19 and 21 years of age in and after leaving foster care. The final report from the federal government has not been received.
<p>Ms. Lori Jackson Black <i>Parent Representative, Region 3</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are budget issues in Region 3. For example, the parent resource center in Matthews County is being realigned and the local SEAC is meeting to determine next steps including working with the local library system. The SEAC is recommending that the coordinator position be changed to that of a parent ombudsman and funded on an as needed basis. • Updated information on local SEAC chairs is underway.
<p>Ms. Jusolyn Bradshaw <i>Juvenile Justice</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The office is now called the Division of Education under the Department of Juvenile Justice. Due to actions of the General Assembly, two correctional centers were closed and two were relocated. Everyone is adjusting to the changes.
<p>Mr. Jack Brandt <i>People with Disabilities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Report
<p>Ms. Christy Evanko <i>Parent Representative, Region 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There continue to be concerns around the region about getting parent involvement in SEACs and ensuring that the administration is making it easy for people to participate.

Name	Report
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Hanover, public comment and SEAC discussion continue to revolve around early identification of students' needs, parent education, transition, and inclusion.
<p>Ms. Jackie Fagan <i>Parent Representative, Region 7</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting parent involvement with local SEACs is difficult and has resulted in cancellation of Disability Awareness Day. Pulaski County Schools participated this summer in a research-based anti-bullying program from Norway. Data show the program leads to a 20 percent decrease in incarceration and other negative effects.
<p>Mr. Brendan Folmar <i>Private Education</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Virginia Association of Independent Specialized Education Facilities (VAISEF) is very excited to have the new <i>Regulations Governing the Operations of Private Schools for Students with Disabilities</i> in place. VAISEF is also very grateful to have had the opportunity for input and development for the new regulations in collaboration with VDOE, parents and the community. VAISEF continues to work hard with member schools to raise overall expectations, academic rigor and programming to better serve students with disabilities. The VAISEF fall conference will be on October 24 - 25 at Elk Hill Farm in Goochland, Virginia. VASIEF will have speakers from Virginia Center for School Safety and State Police to speak about school safety issues and training.
<p>Ms. Fran Goforth <i>Local Directors of Special Education</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Virginia Council for Administrators of Special Education will be holding its fall institute in Short Pump, Virginia on October 7 - 8, 2013. The theme for the institute is, "Close the Arithmetic to Algebra Gap for Students with Disabilities". Dr. Paul Riccomini from Pennsylvania State University and Dr. Brad Witzel from Winthrop University will be the featured speakers. Directors of special education continue to be concerned about the budget cuts that for the upcoming school year.
<p>Ms. Kathryn Hayfield <i>State Agency - Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absent
<p>Ms. Sandra Hermann <i>Parent Representative, Region 2</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within Region 2, many challenges were reported regarding families of children with chronic medical needs; there continue to be struggles with divisions on interpretation, understanding, and process of intermittent homebound services (e.g., should a session be rescheduled if a child is sick and/or not able to be seen, is a child able to participate in extracurricular activities when intermittently homebound

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	<p>or temporarily homebound/home-based, challenges with homebound services for children with “chronic” vs. “acute” needs?) It is felt that the homebound document prepared by VDOE does not adequately address this situation for children with chronic medical issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns were presented by numerous localities about accountability of children within their specific division when enrolled in a regional school program. Questions about tracking of SOL/VAAP scores, notification of scores to parents, access to materials/books, evaluation of program, etc. were all raised. • <i>Norfolk</i> - It was reported that when parents indicate problems, Norfolk schools retaliate against the parents. • <i>Virginia Beach</i> - Virginia Beach is in the process of planning for an upcoming Regional Disability Resource Fair in November. Currently, many administrative changes have taken place. Virginia Beach has lost its Superintendent and the Director of the Office of Programs for Exceptional Children is out on medical leave. Someone with longstanding history within Virginia Beach is serving as Interim Superintendent and the Administrative Coordinator for Special Education is currently serving as the Director of Special Education until the Director’s return. A search firm has been contacted to do a national search for a new Superintendent. The SEAC recently met with the firm to identify important characteristics for a new Superintendent. <p>The SEAC requested a joint presentation of the regional educational program by Virginia Beach Public School division and Southeastern Cooperative Educational Program (SECEP) regional program staff.</p> <p>Virginia Beach has reviewed its division’s policy eliminating the modified standard diploma and incorporated people first language and information about obtaining a locally awarded credit.</p> • <i>Williamsburg/James City County</i> - A new Behavior Specialist has been hired and has done great things with disability sensitivity training. Staff training sessions were held during the summer for ALL new staff, current staff, and program assistants. The training included disability sensitivity and co-teaching programs with instructional specialists. The Parent Resource Center has also coordinated monthly brown bag sessions to begin, including video presentations bringing awareness of special needs.

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Dr. Scott Kizner <i>Local Education Officials</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Report
Ms. Alison MacArthur <i>Teachers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is of concern that there is not a special education teacher on the Governor’s Cabinet. This is unacceptable when we are being held responsible to the same standards as the regular education students. The need to streamline paperwork is also a concern. A statewide IEP system would allow schools to share IEPs with schools systems faster and allow for proper placement of transfer students in the LRE. It would be helpful to have a place where teachers could share ways that data is collected so that teachers are not reinventing the wheel.
Ms. Erica Midboe <i>Transition and Vocational Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transition constituency report was compiled after reaching out to several different stakeholders in the Northern Virginia community including the ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia, which is a local center for independent living. No concerns were reported at this time regarding transitioning students. The ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia is considering conducting a survey in the fall to better serve this population. Local special education parents are concerned that there is no data available to them on the status of students who have recently exited Virginia public education. They were unaware of the data that was being collected and how to access it.
Mr. Darren Minarik <i>Higher Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The special education faculty at Radford University (RU) was approached to participate in the fourth Annual Parent's Day in Roanoke, Virginia on October 12, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This event is held at William Fleming High School. The RU American Sign Language (ASL) Club and Student Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) will provide information about special education programs at RU and share their college experiences. The Parent's Day is organized through a partnership of the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, Carillon Care Connections for Children, and the Roanoke City SEAC. This event has resulted in support from approximately 50 exhibitors and should generate about 300 or more visitors.
Ms. Frederique Vincent <i>Parent Representative, Region 4</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several e-mails have been exchanged over the past months to update the contact list for local SEAC chairs. Options will be explored to increase the response rate.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fauquier County</i> - This year the SEAC plans to research ways of integrating Executive Functioning into the curriculum and continue to assist FCPS in the development of a more robust community based instruction (CBI) and transition program - especially for students with significant disabilities. Partnerships are being explored with Lord Fairfax Community College, and the school system itself (the largest employer in the county). An ongoing concern has been the establishment of consistent procedures for the selection of electives by students with disabilities in order to ensure personal choice, variety, and accommodations as per the IEPs. The school system hired a new Director of Special Education in the spring, but lost their Director of Transition last summer. The position is still vacant. • <i>Prince William County</i> - The SEAC reports that the county is a geographically large county with over 90 schools, led by site-based management, which results in regulations being interpreted differently, resources depleted quickly in certain schools, and students reporting late to school due to transportation issues. Another reported issue is the lack of teachers with a "highly qualified" designation. This results in high-functioning students on the autism spectrum who are on the SOL track, for example, to be placed in classes that are larger with teachers who are highly qualified rather than in lower ratio classes with teachers who are trained in special education but do not have the "highly qualified" designation. • Several contacts were received from local SEACs after Governor Bob McDonnell announced the members of his Governor's Teacher Cabinet. It was not clear whether any of the members were involved in special education. Another concern is the lack of the "parent voice" on this Cabinet. SEACs are mandated to include a teacher in their membership and believe that, similarly, this Cabinet would highly benefit from a parent perspective. A key role of this Cabinet will be to increase parent and community involvement, and I would like to ask the SSEAC members what strategies and ideas they have implemented to do the same in regards to SEAC involvement.
<p>Ms. Jacqui Wilson <i>Parent Representative, Region 3</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amherst County will be having its first local SEAC meeting Tuesday Sept 24, 2013 with Hank Millward from the VDOE as the speaker. The committee will discuss the

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	<p>importance of parent involvement and review diploma/credit accommodations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amherst SEAC is discussing plans for activities in October to highlight Disability History and Awareness Month. • Concerns from region 5 include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ accountability/quality of care given to students with disabilities by related services in school settings (particularly with contracted services) and ○ challenges with students with disabilities participating in extracurricular activities (dances, sporting events, clubs) and what the schools' responsibilities are in providing assistance/services to students in these activities.
<p>Ms. Suzanne Bowers <i>Ex-officio member, PEATC</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEATC is very excited to announce that it is working to become the official bullying prevention organization for the state of Virginia. Children with disabilities are two to three times more likely to be bullied than their nondisabled peers, which explains why PEATC is taking a special interest in putting an end to bullying in Virginia. PEATC has applied to the Governor's office to proclaim the third week in October Bullying Prevention Week. Awareness events, however, will be held the entire month of October. These events include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bullying Prevention Mother/daughter nail painting and a movie watch party, ○ Bullying Prevention Cyber- bullying movie watch party, and ○ Bullying Prevention October Ice Cream and Open House Social. • To conclude the month's bullying prevention activities, a certified bullying prevention trainer from Pacer, the National Bullying Prevention Center in Minnesota, will be training and certifying PEATC Staff on the entire Bullying Prevention training and curriculum. • On Tuesday, October 9, a community training entitled "<i>Bullying Prevention, Everyone's Responsibility - What Parents Can Do</i>" will be hosted by PEATC in Northern Virginia. At the conclusion of the two days of training, PEATC staff will be certified and available to present the workshop to groups and schools throughout the state.
<p>Ms. Heidi Lawyer <i>Ex-officio member, Virginia Board for People with Disabilities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Youth Leadership Forum was held in July. Twenty three delegates participated in training in advocacy and leadership, speaking before a mock legislative panel, learning about resources, and developing their own personal

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	<p>leadership plan. VDOE’s continued support of this program was appreciated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partners in Policymaking class, which provides advocacy training for individuals with developmental disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities, held its first meeting on September 13. The program will run through May 2014. • The Board, through a contract with the Virginia Film Office and Griffith Films, has completed production of a short documentary style film showing the experiences of individuals who have exited training centers and move to the community as a result of the Department of Justice Settlement Agreement. An initial screening will be held at the state Capitol on September 24. DVDs will be provided to all members of the General Assembly. Plans are to post this on YouTube sometime in October. The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) plans to use the DVD in a variety of ways. • Currently, stakeholder feedback is being solicited regarding the Board’s work. This activity is a requirement of the federal funding agency. There is an on-line survey for stakeholders to use to provide feedback. The survey can be accessed on the Web site at www.vbpdfeedback.com. • The public comment period has ended for the 2014 Assessment of the Disability System. After necessary data and other research is compiled and gathered, which will take the better part of the next six months, members of the Board and staff will review the comments and concerns expressed. The information will help shape the Board’s recommendations. The report is scheduled to be released in June 2014.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Darren Minarik and seconded by Ms. Christy Evanko. It was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Friday, September 20, 2013

Members Present: Ms. Eva Aikins, Mr. Adam Amick, Ms. Paula Baker, Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Ms. Cynthia Bauer, Ms. Jusolyn Bradshaw, Mr. Jack Brandt, Ms. Christie Evanko, Ms. Jackie Fagan, Mr. Brendan Folmar, Ms. Fran Goforth, Ms. Sandra Hermann, Ms. Alison MacArthur, Mr. Darren Minarik, Ms. Frederique Vincent, Ms. Jacqui Wilson

Members Absent: Ms. Kathryn Hayfield, Ms. Erica Midboe, Mr. Scott Kizner

Ex-officio Members Absent: Ms. Suzanne Bowers (PEATC); Ms. Heidi Lawyer (VBPD)

Virginia Department of Education Representatives Present: Mr. John Eisenberg, Dr. Suzanne Creasey, Ms. Pat Haymes, Ms. Samantha Hollins, Mr. Jeff Phenicie

Friday, September 20, 2013

Call to Order

Ms. Lori Jackson Black, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Finalize Annual Report

The Annual Report draft was discussed and additional changes were made. Ms. Christy Evanko made a motion to accept the Annual Report document as amended. Ms. Jackie Fagan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The presentation of the annual report to the Virginia Board of Education is on the agenda for October 24, 2013. Ms. Lori Jackson Black and Mr. Darren Minarik will present. After the report is presented, it will be posted on the Department of Education Web site.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Assistant Superintendent's Report

- The Governor has appointed a Teacher Cabinet. There is no special education representation. Members of the public may contact the Governor's Office if they would like to make a public comment about the Teacher Cabinet.
- The VDOE recently launched the Family Special Education Web site with a great deal of information regarding special education topics. Online training may be added to the site in the future. The Web address is www.VAFamilySpEd.org.
- Mr. Eisenberg discussed academic achievement and school improvement. Proficiency Gap Group 1 consists of students with disabilities, students of low socio-economic status, and English language learning students. Gap Group 2 consists of African-American students and Gap Group 3 is Hispanic students. All students, including the gap groups are expected to attain the same achievement targets. Gap Group 1 was aggregated to increase accountability. In the past, if a group was smaller than 50, systems were not required to report results from those students separately. That number has changed to 30, but the aggregation of Gap Group 1 still allows for more divisions to report. Ninety nine percent of Title I schools are now accountable with this setup.

Of 1828 schools, 37 schools are listed as Priority Schools. These are Title I schools that are the lowest performing (bottom five percent). These schools did not meet Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for all students in either reading or math. They are

required to hire a lead turnaround partner to implement a rigorous turn around model, conduct a needs assessment, design an improvement plan, conduct formative assessments of low achieving students, and use a state data tool to support data-based decision making once a quarter.

Seventy three schools are listed as Focus Schools. These are Title I schools that are the second lowest performing (bottom 10 percent). These schools did not meet targets in any one of the three subgroups but did meet the overall AMOs. They are required to engage a state-approved coach to help the division; develop, implement, and monitor interventions strategies for at risk students. To exit focus status, the proficiency gap group for which the school was originally identified must meet its performance goals for two consecutive years.

Seven hundred fifteen schools met all goals. Five hundred thirty four did not meet all requirements, but did not trigger the need for an improvement plan. Ten schools are new. Four hundred fifty nine schools do need an improvement plan. A projected one hundred ninety six (not Title I schools) missed one of the subgroups that make up Gap Group 1. They will receive assistance from the VDOE including a Technical Assistance Plan.

- Mr. Eisenberg gave an update on the legislation resulting in an A-F Grading. The grading formula is scheduled for first review at the September 26, 2013 Board of Education meeting. Public comment on this issue is now open. For more information, or to make public comment, see the VDOE Web site: <http://www.VDOE.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/>.

The proposal is to develop the grades for each school using the following information:

1. Proficiency of a school's students in core content areas of math, English, science, and history as measured by passing rates on state assessments;
2. Growth or learning gains of elementary or middle school students in reading or math as measured year to year; and
3. Number of high school students on track for standard or advanced diplomas, indicating college and career readiness.

There are concerns that these grades will bring visibility to poor performing schools and affect bond ratings, home values, and growth of businesses in areas. A fact sheet is available regarding accountability at http://www.VDOE.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/index.shtml.

Currently there are five schools that are not accredited: one in Alexandria, two in Norfolk, and two in Petersburg. These schools are due to be taken over by the VDOE and made into a unique local educational agency, unless a lawsuit challenging to constitutionality of this is successful.

- Mr. Eisenberg gave an update on the new Charter School, the Richmond Career Development Academy. Ten students between the ages of 14 and 16 began in September. The students, who have a range of communication and social skills, began the year by using the I'm Determined tools. The new principal is Maurice Burton. Two teachers

have been hired. Both are Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs). Charter Schools are becoming more and more prevalent. The Richmond Career Development Academy is currently the only Charter School in the country for students with disabilities that is located within a regular school building and not segregated.

- The next topic presented was information on a new proposal for a Statewide IEP System with uniform forms and definitions. It would allow for centralized compliance monitoring and dispute resolution. It would improve the delivery of data. However, local educational agencies would lose local control and flexibility. The issue will be explored because it has been requested, but it may or may not come to fruition.
- Regarding the Special Diploma, a stakeholder meeting is planned for the near future. Models will be presented and the options may have multiple levels. There is the possibility of adding a seal to alert potential employers about skills the student has attained. The VDOE is looking at innovative High School transition models. There will be a multi-year rollout, but the timeline is not yet developed.

Those persons who are interested in changing the name of the diploma (due to the connotation that “special” may have) are welcome to make public comment or speak to their legislator.

- October is Disability History and Awareness Month. The Anti-bullying video is now on the I’m Determined Web site. The VDOE is exploring the posting of the video on the Governor’s site and on its own Web site. A grant was awarded to I’m Determined to help create activities related to bullying. The goal is to move the students from self-advocates to issue advocates.

Subcommittee Meetings

Members convened in subcommittees to discuss ongoing topics. The group reconvened as a whole and subcommittees provided reports.

Policy and Regulations Subcommittee

The committee discussed several issues: development of a state IEP form, facilitated IEPs, and bullying of students with disabilities.

- The subcommittee requested more information on the state IEP form, and Ms. Pat Haymes will bring more information on this to the next meeting.
- The subcommittee discussed the role of an IEP facilitator and the possibility that the agency will move forward with an initiative to provide facilitated IEPs. There will also be discussions about how the program would be administered; for example, by the VDOE, higher education, or perhaps the state education and advocacy agency.
- Students with disabilities are bullied both by other students and by administrators and teachers. The subcommittee discussed how bullying can result in denial of a free appropriate public education as provided by federal and state regulations.

- Information regarding accreditations with warning to 395 schools across Virginia was released today. The subcommittee members will plan to discuss this further at the next meeting.

Student Outcomes Subcommittee

The group reviewed data relative to the State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Review (APR). The committee conducted specific analysis around identified areas of concern including dropouts, discipline of students with disabilities and assessment. Graduation rates were compared among subgroups in conjunction with federal accountability measures regarding school completion that was compared across states. The analysis led to identifying the need for guidance for parents, beginning no later than the second grade, to understand the ramifications of program decisions and their affect on diploma status. Further recommendations on strategies or resources that will improve outcomes related to graduation, dropout rates and discipline were also discussed.

Student Achievement Subcommittee

The group continued the discussion on improvement activities and how they relate back to the indicators. Many of the resources are available to LEAs upon request; however, some LEAs do not take advantage of the tools for various reasons and some parents even contact VDOE directly. The subcommittee is concerned with how this information and tools are making it to the end user (the students). To address this, VDOE is creating online tools and sharing them through its Web site. It will be important to promote these tools and make them easily accessible.

Public Comment Review

The Committee thanks the people who made public comment at the meeting. The VDOE will be sending letters on behalf of the SSEAC.

Regarding the testing issue, at Mr. John Eisenberg's suggestion, Dr. Sharon Siler was contacted and her response was to test the student earlier to give the scores more time to come in. A committee member made the suggestion that if the student marked the answers on the large print form, a proctor could simultaneously enter the answers so that the test could be graded with the other computer versions. Ms. Pat Haymes' office will follow up and the testing issue will be discussed in the Achievement Subcommittee in the future.

Regarding accessibility to local school division Web sites, Ms. Pat Haymes has been instructed to bring the issue to the next Special Education Council meeting (which includes area Special Education directors).

Suggested Agenda Topics for Upcoming Meetings

The committee reviewed plans for future meetings and added the Facilitated IEP as an agenda item for the December 2013 meeting. The topics for future meetings are as follows:

December 2013:

- I'm Determined Youth presentation on anti-bullying
- Aspiring Leaders presentations
- Facilitated IEP Focus Groups

April 2014 and beyond:

- New Transition Center
- IEP/Special Education Diploma revisions
- Charter School Update
- Legislative Update
- Credit Accommodations

Ms. Jackie Fagan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Adam Amick seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the committee adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Future meeting dates:

September 19-20, 2013

December 5-6, 2013

April 3-4, 2014

July 17-18, 2014

September 18-19, 2014

December 11-12, 2014