# DRAFT MINUTES Virginia Board of Education Standing Committee on the Standards of Quality

**Wednesday, March 20, 2019**

**2:00 p.m.**

**Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building**

**101 North 14th Street, Richmond, Virginia**

## Welcome and Opening Comments

The following Board of Education (Board) members were present for the March 20, 2019 meeting of the Committee on the Standards of Quality: Kim Adkins, Diane Atkinson, Dr. Francisco Durán, Daniel Gecker, Anne Holton, Dr. Keisha Pexton, Dr. Tamara Wallace, and Dr. Jamelle Wilson. Dr. James Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was also present. Elizabeth Lodal was absent.

Mr. Gecker, chair of this committee, convened the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

## Public Comment

Mr. Gecker opened the floor to public comment. No individuals requested to address the committee.

## Presentation: Standards of Quality Review - Policy Considerations for Equity

Link to presentation: [Standards of Quality Review – Policy Considerations for Equity](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/committees_standing/quality/2019/soq-policy-options%20.pptx) (PPT)

Zachary Robbins, Director of Policy for the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), and Dr. Jennifer Piver-Renna, Senior Executive Director of Research for VDOE, presented potential policy options to address equity in the Standards of Quality (SOQ). The policy considerations were grouped into three areas: (1) Recruiting and Retaining High-Quality Teachers; (2) Specialized Instructional Support Personnel; and (3) Staffing for English Learner (EL) Students.

Mr. Robbins and Dr. Piver-Renna presented research on each of the three areas, and discussed the following policy considerations:

* Recruiting and Retaining High-Quality Teachers
  + Targeted compensation adjustments for teachers
  + Develop teacher leaders
  + Coaching/mentoring for new teachers
* Specialized Instructional Support Personnel
  + Reaffirm the previous Board recommendation of a 1:250 ratio of school counselors-to-students, with priority staffing for high poverty schools
  + Remove social workers, psychologists, and nurses from the support services category and create a new Specialized Instructional Support Personnel staffing category with recommended ratios
* Staffing for EL Students
  + Revise current EL staffing ratios in SOQ to distribute resources based on proficiency level and/or other indicators of student need

Teacher effectiveness was discussed. One Board member asked how teacher effectiveness is measured. Dr. Piver-Renna explained that many of the research studies cited are conducted in states that, unlike Virginia, have teacher effectiveness surveys. It would be necessary for Virginia to establish a measure of teacher effectiveness in order to implement policy changes around the subject. As Virginia does not currently have a measure of effectiveness for teachers, years of experience may initially be used as a proxy for effectiveness.

One Board member asked how provisions regarding teacher compensation could be included in the SOQ, as the SOQ does not currently address salary. Mr. Robbins responded that this language could be addressed similarly to compensation adjustments that are provided in the budget. Board members discussed how this could be included in the SOQ.

Board members requested data on the success of programs implemented by other states, particularly other states’ programs for teacher mentoring and teacher leaders.

Board members also requested data on the STEM Incentive Grant program that Mr. Robbins discussed. This grant is currently being utilized in Virginia to attract, recruit, and retain high-quality diverse individuals to teach science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) subjects in Virginia middle and high schools experiencing difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers. This grant is an example of a teacher incentive program.

EL students were discussed. One Board member requested additional data on the types of resources needed by each proficiency level of EL students, to demonstrate why differentiated funding is needed.

One Board member asked how long it would take to establish a pool of candidates qualified to be teacher leaders. Such information would be necessary to determine when a requirement could be established that would be able to be met by school divisions.

The Board discussed the broader plan for equity and the SOQ moving forward. Mr. Gecker identified the equitable distribution of high quality teachers as the first priority for equity, the establishment of high quality school leadership as the second priority, teacher mentorship as the third priority, and teacher leaders as the fourth.

Board members discussed the Board’s constitutional authority to periodically review the adequacy of existing school divisions to promote the realization of the SOQ. One Board member noted that the General Assembly requires consent of the jurisdictions in order to consolidate divisions. Board members expressed interest in data on how division consolidation would affect resources and how altering district attendance zones would affect outcomes.

Board members discussed creating a tiered licensure structure for teachers, to identify high quality or experienced teachers. This could provide teachers with more upward mobility in the teaching profession, outside of becoming an administrator. Comparison was made to teachers that become division chairs or heads of a department within their schools; however, Dr. Lane noted that the increase in compensation for such positions is often nominal.

Board members emphasized the importance of providing teacher mentors and new teachers sufficient scheduled time for mentoring. One Board member asked how the Board could allocate such time without disrupting instructional time. Mr. Robbins compared adding requirements for mentoring time to the provision requiring a planning period for all teachers, which was added to the SOQ several years ago.

One Board member suggested defining an “inexperienced teacher” as a teacher in their first, second, or third years of teaching. Board members discussed how provisionally licensed teachers would be measured for teaching experience.

Board members requested data on the following subjects: (1) distribution of experienced and inexperienced teachers in Virginia, similarly to what was presented for provisionally licensed and unlicensed teachers; (2) distribution of nationally board certified teachers; and (3) distribution of teachers for special education and EL populations.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.