# VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION BRIEFINGRestructuring of Teacher Education Programs in Virginia (1987-1992)

April 24, 2018

## **Background**

“On March 26, 1986, Governor Gerald L. Baliles convened the Governor’s Commission on Excellence in Education, charging it to recommend specific actions to make Virginia one of the nation’s top states in the quality of education it offers. The sixteen-member commission included state legislators, members of SCHEV [State Council of Higher Education for Virginia], and all nine member of the BOE [Board of Education]. Several committees were formed to divide up the work of the commission.”

***[Source: Teacher Education Policy: Narratives, Stories, and Cases, edited by Hendrik D. Gideonse, 1992]***

“The Governor’s Commission, created in 1986 by Governor Baliles, spearheaded Virginia’s participation in the national movement to improve public education. Central to this reform movement is the enhancement of teaching as a profession, including significant changes in the way teachers are trained. In response, the Commission recommended that ‘an undergraduate degree in an arts and sciences discipline be required for all teachers educated in Virginia by 1992 and that by July 1, 1993, every teacher should have, or be working toward, a graduate degree appropriate to her or his or her teaching area.’” [A number of issues were considered regarding the proposed requirement for a graduate degree – cost; lack of research establishing a direct correlation between a master’s degree and a more effective classroom teacher; prerequisites for entering a master’s program; and the impact on teachers.]

***[Source: Graduate Degree Recommendation by James W. Dyke, Jr., 1988]***

“In response to the Commission on Excellence in Education report, the Board of Education has initiated numerous activities to improve the quality of public education. The recommendation that will have the greatest impact on teacher preparation is that of restructuring teacher education. The following excerpts from the report provide the basis for restructuring the teacher education programs:

*‘To bring about a real change in the way teachers are prepared in college, the undergraduate degree in teacher education should be abolished. The first requirement for teachers in Virginia must be that they are broadly educated in the liberal arts and thoroughly prepared in the subjects they will teach.*

*This degree should not be simply a traditional arts and sciences bachelor’s degree that includes a few education courses. The four-year curriculum for students preparing to teach should consist of the greatest number of courses in the arts and sciences which can be included feasibly and some specially developed education courses. Students earning a degree in an arts and sciences discipline should have an opportunity to meet the state requirements to certified to teach. We recommend that Virginia’s approved programs standards be revised to limit professional education course requirements to 18 semester hours.*

*Universities may develop new kinds of four-year programs to prepare teachers or five-year or six-year programs with more extensive preparation in arts and sciences and in professional education.’*

Teacher preparation involves the collaboration efforts of higher education, the public schools, and the State Department of Education. In order to provide direction for the Commonwealth, the Board appointed the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Teacher Education. The committee consists of three members of the Board of Education and three members of the State Council of Higher Education. The committee has solicited assistance from other sources through public hearings, meetings, and correspondence. Additionally, letters have been sent to all college and university presidents and their governing boards requesting proposals for restructuring teacher education programs…”

***[Source: James W. Dyke, Jr., Chairman, Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Education; Department of Education brochure, Excellence in Education—A Plan for Virginia’s Future, A Progress Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Teacher Education, October 1987]***

## **Timeline to Restructure Programs:**

A timeline was established to restructure teacher education programs. Guidelines (see text box) were approved by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on August 19, 1987. Institutions submitted conceptual restructuring proposals and then restructured plans that were reviewed by SCHEV and the Board of Education. From July 1, 1988 to June 30, 1990, institutions phased in restructured programs. New Board of Education regulations were scheduled to be adopted in 1992 at which time requirements were to become effective for all students and approved programs.

## **Guidelines for Restructuring Teacher Education Programs:**

1. The proposal should take into account recent teacher education reform reports and must be based on research for content, design, and instructional practices.
2. The proposal must be designed in collaboration with faculty members of the institution and local school division personnel. It must include an ongoing process for collaborative planning, development, implementation, and evaluation.
3. The proposal must describe a teacher education program that will develop knowledge and competencies in general studies, professional studies, field experiences, and arts and sciences or disciplines appropriate to the endorsement being sought. Definitions and rationales for each area shall be developed in the restructured proposal submitted by the institution.
4. The proposal must require that prospective teachers meet institutional requirements for degrees in the arts and sciences or disciplines appropriate to the endorsement being sought.
5. The proposal must include specific plans for the recruitment and retention of minority students. In addition, it should include strategies for attracting academically talented students into the teacher preparation program. Implementation of this guideline should be developed within the institution’s established recruitment and retention policy.
6. The proposal must incorporate specific entrance, retention, and exit criteria and include plans for frequent and systematic monitoring of student progress throughout the teacher preparation program, including the National Teacher Examinations (NTE).
7. The proposal must be limited to 18 hours of professional studies coursework, not including field experiences. A proposal exceeding the 18-hour limit for the bachelor’s degree will not be accepted without a clear and convincing rationale.
8. The proposal must include a continuum of field experiences ranging from observation to direct instruction in student teaching. These experiences must complement professional studies coursework.
9. The proposal must include a process for annual evaluation of the teacher preparation program and systematic follow-up of its graduates, including performance on the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program (BTAP).

## **Notes:**

Since restructuring programs between 1987-1992, regulations have changed, such as increasing the limit on professional studies to 24 semester hours for elementary education and special education programs. The Beginning Teacher Assistance Program was eliminated. The professional teacher’s assessments have been changed from the National Teacher Examinations to the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment and Praxis assessments.

The current Board of Education regulations do require that teacher candidates shall complete academic degrees in the arts and sciences (or equivalent), except in health, physical, and career and technical education.

## **Current Programs Approved by the Virginia Board of Education:**

The [attachment](http://doe.virginia.gov/teaching/educator_preparation/college_programs/approved-teacher-ed-pgms.pdf) - **Approved Educator Preparation Programs** (link below) lists the current programs approved by the Board of Education. The list shows institutions with undergraduate and graduate programs.

(Link: <http://doe.virginia.gov/teaching/educator_preparation/college_programs/approved-teacher-ed-pgms.pdf>)