| **Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item** | **Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia** |
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# Agenda Item: K

## Date: June 28, 2018

### Title: Report on Civic Education Policy *(written report)*

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## Purpose of Presentation:

For information only. No action required.

## Executive Summary: The Virginia Commission on Civic Education (the Civic Commission), rated civic education policies in the Commonwealth and determined needed policy elements and support for the Community Engagement and Civic Responsibility aspect of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*. The policy ratings and needs outlined in Attachment A support Priority 3 of the Board’s Comprehensive Plan: Ensure successful implementation of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* and the accountability system for school quality as embodied in the revisions to the *Standards of Accreditation*.

## Action Requested:

No action requested.

## Superintendent’s Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends the Board of Education receive the Report on Civic Education Policy

## Previous Review or Action:

No previous review or action.

## **Background Information and Statutory Authority:**

The Education Commission of the States and the [National Center for Learning and Civic Engagement](https://www.ecs.org/initiatives/national-center-for-learning-civic-engagement/) periodically review state statute, administrative code, standards and curriculum to capture the status of civic learning across the United States.  Recently, this body conducted a review consisting of a 50-state comparisons showing how all states approach specific civic education policies. In the spring of 2017, the Education sub-committee of the Virginia Commission on Civic Education (the Civic Commission), used the State Civic Education Policy Gap Tool to rate civic education policies in the Commonwealth. The Civic Commission also determined needed policy elements that would best support the life ready skills necessary for the Community Engagement and Civic Responsibility component of the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*.

## Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Following the Board of Education’s review of the attachment, staff will be available to share questions, concerns, or actions with the Civic Commission. One staff member of the Department serves as an ex-officio member on the Civic Commission and as a member of the Education sub-committee.

## Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

One member of the Department serves as ex-officio on the Civic Commission and as a member of the Education sub-committee. All costs associated with meetings and functions of the Civic Commission are provided through the Department of Education’s operating funds.

Attachment A

## Key Civic Education Policy Elements

**Policy 1:** The co-equal civic purpose of education at the state, district and institutional level.

* Preparation of students for full participation in civic life is included as a co-equal purpose (with preparation for college and careers) in the state education mission(s).
	+ **Board of Education Mission:**

*The mission of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, in cooperation with their partners, is to develop policies and provide leadership that improve student achievement and prepare students to succeed in postsecondary education and the workplace, and to become engaged and enlightened citizens.*

* + VDOE **MISSION**

*The mission of the Virginia Department of Education is to lead and facilitate the development and implementation of a quality public education system that meets the needs of students and assists them in becoming educated, productive, responsible, and self-reliant citizens.*

* The civic mission of education includes equipping students with the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to participate effectively in democratic life and cultivating concern and responsibility for their communities.

*The goal of civics instruction is to develop in all students the requisite knowledge and skills for informed, responsible participation in public life. Civics instruction should provide regular opportunities at each grade level for students to develop a basic understanding of politics and government and to practice the skills of good citizenship. It should instill relevant skills so that students can assess political resources, deal intelligently with controversy, and understand the consequences of policy decisions.*

* The civic mission of schools is further reflected in the mission statements of public higher education institutions and school districts throughout the state.

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| **Policy 1** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 4 | Civics is identified as **a goal** in the state education mission(s), but other goals are more prominent. |
| 4 | The state has a **recommendation** encouraging the civic mission of education be reflected in the missions of school districts and public higher education institutions. |

**Needs**:

* Profile of a Graduate reflects a citizenship component but it needs to:
	+ define what that means
	+ define how students, schools, divisions are held accountable.

**Policy 2:** Standards and curricula for education at each grade level, preschool through postsecondary.

* **Civics and citizenship education credit hour and course requirements (either through discrete courses or embedded within social studies curriculum) are included in state standards and curriculum frameworks for all grade levels**. There is a Civics strand for each course K – 3. Courses offered at middle school (assessed with a SOL state assessment) and GOVT course (required for graduation). The .1i social science skill is written in the K – 12 *2015 History and Social Science Standards of Learning*. Each .1i of each course relates specifically to citizenry:
	+ **Elementary** (K – Virginia Studies) –

The student will demonstrate skills for historical thinking, geographical analysis, economic decision making, and responsible citizenship by practicing good citizenship skills while collaborating, compromising, and participating in classroom activities.

* + **Secondary** (USI – USII, World Geo – Virginia and United States History)

The student will demonstrate skills for historical thinking, geographical analysis, economic decision making, and responsible citizenship by identifying the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the ethical use of material or intellectual property.

* + **Civics and Economics and Virginia and United States Government**

The student will demonstrate skills for historical thinking, geographical analysis, economic decision making, and responsible by applying civic virtue and democratic principles to make collaborative decisions.

* **Standards establish requirements for civics knowledge in government, history, economics, law and democracy.\*** Students should develop an understanding of the values and principles of American constitutional democracy and of some of the key issues in the functioning of a democratic republic. They should be aware of their rights; willing to fulfill their responsibilities; able to obtain, understand, and evaluate information relating to the performance of public officials; and willing to hold those officials accountable. They should understand the consequences of political and policy decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels.
* **Standards include the development of civic skills such as accessing and analyzing issue information, deliberating between alternatives and problem-solving.\* These goals are best accomplished through discussion and simulations that apply civic skills to real-world issues and events.** Each .1i of each course and specifically to the CE and GOVT courses:
* **Standards include the development of civic dispositions encompassing civic values such as a commitment to the public good, equality and rule of law, and behaviors including civility and respectful discourse.\*** Each .1i of each course relates specifically to citizenry:
* **The development of civic knowledge, skills and disposition through inquiry-based instruction may be guided by tools such as the C3 Social Studies Framework.** The 2014 and 2015 Review and Revision committees consulted the C3 Framework when developing the social science skills for the 2015 Standards.

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| **Policy 2** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 5 | Civics and citizenship education credit hours and course requirements are specified in standards for **all** grade levels and postsecondary degrees, **preschool to postsecondary.** |

**Needs**:

* More instructional focus on K – 5 levels.
* Resources to support simulations, making connections, and opportunities for cross-curricular planning.

**Policy 3:** Standards include inquiry-based instruction that results in informed action and demonstration of learning.

* **Standards include the development of civic skills and dispositions through the hands-on application of knowledge to real-world issues that require student assessment, analysis and communication.**
* **Standards include participatory skills that incorporate group work, interface with elected officials and community partners, communicating perspectives and arguments, and planning strategically for civic change.**
* **Application of civic learning and opportunities for informed action are extended through alignment with out-of-school time/extra- or co-curricular activities.**

All three will be addressed through the development of local alternative assessments (LAA) and performance assessments.

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| **Policy 3** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 1 | Civic learning recommendations or requirements include **traditional memorization** of governmental and historical structures, dates and figures. |

**Needs**:

* Support for local school divisions with the development of local alternative assessments (LAA) and performance assessments
* Support from local and state representatives for opportunities for students to “interface with elected officials and community partners, communicating perspectives and arguments, and planning strategically for civic change”.
* Support and provide professional development to:
	+ understand and differentiate between service learning vs community service;
	+ empower and encourage students to be “Change Agents”; and
	+ secure resources online
* Research the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and Project Citizen for ideas to support teachers

**Policy 4:** Integration of civic learning across all academic disciplines.

* **Curriculum across all academic disciplines incorporates civic learning.**
* **For example, language arts curriculum could mandate civics education reading content such as historical documents, letter writing or oral presentations.** English Standards were approved in January 2017.
* **Engaged pedagogies across all academic disciplines build 21st century civic skills such as communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, and creativity and innovation.** English Standards were approved in January 2017. They were aligned to include the 5Cs: Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Citizenship; Science Standards are currently being revised and will probably follow suit.
* **Non-cognitive character education and life skills programs incorporate civic values, dispositions and responsibilities.** All are local division decisions. They can be addressed through the development of local alternative assessments (LAA) and performance assessments.

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| **Policy 4** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 3 | Civic learning integration across academic disciplines and non-cognitive skills programs is recommended by state standards for some levels preschool to postsecondary. |

**Needs**:

* Time for instruction and application.
* Support for local school divisions with the development of local alternative assessments (LAA) and performance assessments
* Support from local and state representatives for opportunities for students to “interface with elected officials and community partners, communicating perspectives and arguments, and planning strategically for civic change”.
* Civic values, dispositions and responsibilities should be integrated into every discipline across the board.
* Provide resources to ALL teachers for cross-discipline planning and instruction.

**Policy 5:** Pre-service licensure/accreditation supports teachers as civic educators.

* **Pre-service teacher licensure/accreditation requirements related to civics knowledge, skills and dispositions prepare all teachers at all levels and in all subject areas to be civic educators.**

*Each year, the VDOE is involved with the accreditation and program approval for institutions of higher education (IHE). As a major component of that review involves the evaluation of specific programs via the matrix and supporting documentation.*

* **Pre-service teacher licensure/accreditation requirements support use of engaged pedagogies that support civic learning.**

*This is a local division decision.*

* **Civics and government teachers are required to be specifically certified in these disciplines.**

*In Superintendent’s Memo #053-14 and in response to Senate Bill 1345 of the 2013 General Assembly, the Virginia Board of Education amended the Licensure Regulations for School Personnel to require the following: Any individual licensed and endorsed to teach (i) middle school civics or economics or (ii) high school government or history who is seeking renewal of such license is required to demonstrate knowledge of Virginia history or state and local government by completing a module or professional development course specifically related to Virginia history or state and local government that has a value of five professional development points. This requirement applies for purposes of the individual's next or initial renewal occurring after July 1, 2014.*

**Endorsements required to complete module for recertificcation**

* Early-Middle Education K-8
* Elementary Grades NK-8
* Elementary Grades K-7
* Elementary Grades K-8
* Elementary Grades 1-7
* Elementary Grades 4-7
* Kindergarten Elementary Grades 1-7
* Economics
* Government
* History
* History and Social Sciences
* Middle Education Grades 4-8
* Middle Education Grades 5-8
* Middle Education Grades 6-8
* Middle Education Grades 6-7
* Middle Education 6-8:  History and Social Science
* Social Studies-Without History

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| **Policy 5** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 5 | There are robust pre-service licensure/accreditation requirement for all teachers.In addition, civics and government teachers are required to be specifically **certified** in these disciplines. |

**Needs**:

* Civic module
* Preservice professional development

**Policy 6:** Professional development supports teachers as civic educators.

* **Teacher professional development in civics knowledge, skills and dispositions supports all teachers at all levels and in all subject areas to be civic educators.**
* **Teacher professional development is required in quality instructional practices and engaged pedagogies, including inquiry-based approaches such as developing questions and planning inquiries, applying disciplinary tools and concepts, evaluating sources and using evidence.**
* **Teacher professional development is required to support planning and implementation of student-centered community service-learning projects applying knowledge to authentic local issues.**
* **Professional development for the integration of civic learning is supported by ongoing funding dedicated for this purpose.**

*These bullets are addressed at the local division level. At the state level, providing professional development is limited to Institutes that occur once a year. These Institutes have a capacity of 200 teachers and range between 4 – 8 locations across the Commonwealth. Also at the state level, is the Virginia Council of the Social Studies (VCSS). There is an opportunity to offer sessions with a civic focus. The Commission offers a Summit once a year, and various museums, organizations, and universities offer professional development.*

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| **Policy 6** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 2.5 | Professional development in civic learning and engaged pedagogies is available only to civics, history, and social studies teachers. |
| 3 | Civics professional development draws from **established** professional development budgets. |

**Needs**:

* Professional development in civics learning and engaged pedagogies provided more often.
* Seek out funding streams to provide teachers with opportunities to learn and engage in the content.
* Seek out partnerships with and invite various non-civic or social studies organizations to provide professional development so that teachers will better understand cross-curricular and discipline connections.

**Policy 7:** Assessments of student progress toward civic learning outcomes is used to measure student performance and inform instructional efforts.

* **Assessment of student progress toward civic education outcomes is used to measure student performance and inform instructional efforts.**

*Currently, students, teachers, schools, and school divisions are held accountable for civic education outcomes through a Standards of Learning assessment at the middle school level for Civics and Economics. This assessment provides teachers, schools and school divisions with quantitative data regarding student knowledge of content. For high school students, Government is required for graduation regardless of the type of diploma a student is seeking.*

* **Annual performance-based assessments and qualitative indicators capture the development of student civic knowledge, skills and dispositions, including higher-order thinking skills.**

*School divisions are working to create performance-based assessments. In order to develop qualitative indicators, teachers will need training. VDOE has hired a LAA coordinator to support providing professional development in this area.*

* **Indicators/metrics for civic education are included in instructional assessments and improvement plans.**

*Improvement plans include civic education portion if there is low academic achievement as noted by the CE scores.*

* **Civic education is included in assessment and planning focused on closing the achievement and civic opportunity gap\* for low-income, minority and special needs students.**
* **Civic education assessment data is included in the state longitudinal data system.**

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| **Policy 7** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 3.5 | There is a required annual assessment of civic knowledge. |
| 3 | Civics assessments are required at some grade levels and postsecondary degrees, preschool to postsecondary. |

**Needs:**

* Time for instruction and application.
* Support for local school divisions with the development of local alternative assessments (LAA) and performance assessments.
* Seek out funding streams to provide teachers with opportunities to learn and engage in the content and create assessments that capture the development of student civic knowledge, skills and dispositions, including higher-order thinking skills.

**Policy 8:** Accountability indicators of teacher, district and school/institution performance.

* **Accountability tracking is required for civic education and is included in the state accountability system.**
* **Compliance with civic education standards and requirements is incorporated in job descriptions and has meaningful consequences for educator and administrator evaluations and appointment, promotion and tenure decisions.**
* **Compliance with civic education standards and requirements and successful civic education achievement has meaningful consequences for school districts and educational institutions.**
* **Civic behaviors and measures, such as student and educator surveys on bullying and open and respectful discourse, are incorporated into accountability and reporting on institutional climate.**
* **Civic learning/social studies outcomes are equitably included in district and school “report cards” and other public reporting of school achievement and institutional climate.**
* **State has a designation for high civic education and engagement achievement or civically engaged institutions.** *Board of Education's Excellence in Civics Education Seal – Awarded to students who meet each of the following four criteria:*
	+ *Satisfy the requirement to earn a Modified Standard Diploma, a Standard Diploma or an Advanced Studies Diploma*
	+ *Complete Virginia & United States History and Virginia & United States Government courses with a grade of "B" or higher*
	+ *Complete 50 hours of voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities, such as volunteering for a charitable or religious organization that provides services to the poor, sick or less fortunate; participating in Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts or similar youth organizations; participating in Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC); participating in political campaigns, government internships, Boys State, Girls State or Model General Assembly; and participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities that have a civics focus. Any student who enlists in the United States military prior to graduation will be deemed to have met this community service requirement.*
	+ *Have good attendance and no disciplinary infractions as determined by local school board policies.*

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| **Policy 8** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 2 | **Some** accountability tracking of civic education is in place, but compliance is **not included** in educator or administrator job descriptions or evaluations. |

**Needs:**

* Take a more active role in the promotion and advocacy of
	+ teacher, district and school/institution performance;
	+ the seal.

**Policy 9:** Measures of community impact.

* **Civic education incorporates community-focused service-learning linked to curriculum.**

*This is a local division decision.*

* **Tracking of quantitative community impact, including service hours and accomplishments, is established and reported.**

*The VBOE nor the VDOE collects data on this indicator.*

* **Surveys and community input are included in qualitative measures of community impact, which encompasses both contributions to the community and connections between residents, communities and schools.**

*The VBOE nor the VDOE collects data on this indicator.*

* **Community and neighborhoods surveys incorporate measures of student community impact and relationships as an element of civic health.**

*The VBOE nor the VDOE collects data on this indicator.*

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| **Policy 9** |
| **Rating** | **Explanation** |
| 2 | Civic learning includes community focused projects, but **no tracking** or measures of community impact are required. |

**Needs:**

* Time for instruction and application.
* Support for local school divisions with the development of local alternative assessments (LAA), performance assessments, and service learning.
* Incorporation into and aligned with other disciplines.