Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) Meeting Minutes
April 30, 2024; 10:30 AM to 12:00PM
[Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) Meeting - YouTube](#).

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The Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) meets twice annually with this meeting scheduled as the first of 2024. The meeting was held on Tuesday, April 30 from 10:30-12:00PM at the Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services building. The meeting was broadcasted through the VDOE YouTube channel. Mr. Reginald Fox, Virtual Learning Specialist presided the meeting starting with the welcome and virtual protocols. Virtual learning is a part of the Office of Educational Technology and Classroom Innovation (OETCI). The disclaimer was provided on the screen that the meeting was held pursuant to the *2021 Appropriation Act language – SB7001* and *meeting by electronic means set forth in subsection C of § 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia*.

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Mr. Fox continued with introductions. Participants in attendance represent the following school division representatives, organizations, and VDOE as listed.

Dr. Mervin B. Daughtery, Region I, Chesterfield County Schools
- ✓ (Designee: Mr. Ernest Longworth)

Dr. Raymond L. Haynes, Region II, Hampton City Schools [absent]

Dr. Bernard Trey Davis, Region III, Richmond County Public Schools [absent]

Dr. Kevin Newman, Region IV, Manassas City Public Schools [absent]

Dr. Garett Smith, Region V, Staunton Public Schools
- ✓ (Designee: Mr. Tom Lundquist)

Mr. C. Dwayne Huff, Region VI, Craig County Schools [absent]

Dr. Robert Graham, Region VII, Pulaski County Public Schools
- ✓ (Designee: Mr. Lincoln Whitaker)
- ✓ Mr. Robbie W. Mason, Region VIII, Charlotte County Public Schools
- ✓ Mr. Rodney Jordan, Virginia School Boards Association
- ✓ Ms. Amy Griffin, Executive Director, Virginia Association of School Superintendents
- ✓ Dr. Mitzi Fehl-Seward, Vice President of Digital Learning, WHRO
- ✓ Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director of Virtual VA

VDOE participants:
- ✓ Dr. Michelle Wallace, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
- ✓ Ms. Calypso Gilstrap, Associate Director, Office of Educational Technology and Classroom Innovation
- ✓ Dr. Meg Foley, Coordinator of Virtual Learning
- ✓ Mr. Reggie Fox, Virtual Learning Specialist
- ✓ Mr. Ryan Champney, Instructional Technology Specialist
- ✓ Ms. Keisha Tennessee, Computer Science Coordinator
- ✓ Ms. Diane Carnohan, the Virginia Department of Education Information Security Officer
- ✓ Dr. John Mustachio, the VDOE's eRate Coordinator for K-12 Education.

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Dr. Michelle Wallace, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction provided opening remarks.

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The agenda follows with presentations and discussion from OETCI staff.
Virginia Educational Technology Plan – Ms. Calypso Gilstrap
Ms. Gilstrap reviewed the 3 major tenets of the Virginia Educational Technology Plan to include Access, Use, and Design. She continued to provide objectives and how students and families are accessing digital resources.
1: Access: Strengthen schools and communities with a safe, secure, and robust technology infrastructure to support access to all educators, students, leaders, and families.

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1.2. Extend broadband services to unserved and underserved areas.

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Ms. Gilstrap introduced and showed the Commonwealth Connections map at the following URL: https://commonwealth-connection.com. The map indicates areas of underserved students where there could be limited to no connectivity to access the Internet. Committee members reviewed the online map.

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Mr. Reggie Fox engaged the committee with the following questions.

When we think about ACCESS, what are some opportunities that may be included in school division technology plans? What action steps will you take to use the Commonwealth Connection? **Much of the discussion centered around identifying gaps of connectivity access across areas of the state and its potential impacts on students and families.**

As a result of this review, what can VDOE do to close some of the gaps and what resources are provided to families? **VDOE works with the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), eRate Coordinator communications with school divisions about plans for increasing connectivity using funds provided. School divisions provide hotspots, other ways of connectivity, and special rates from Internet providers.**

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Virginia Educational Technology Plan – Dr. Meg Foley
Dr. Foley reviewed the second tenet USE. She continued to provide objectives and how students and families are leveraging virtual learning and how educators take advantage of virtual professional learning opportunities.

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2.4. Leverage the power of virtual learning to enhance the availability, accessibility, and quality of online learning opportunities for students, educators, and other stakeholders.
- a. Provide a statewide learning management system (LMS) to support all educators and students in developing and accessing high quality and engaging content, multimedia, and communication.

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Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director of Virtual VA provided updates on the program and addressed the Statewide LMS. School divisions are using CANVAS as a platform for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

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Dr. Foley reviewed--
- b. Expand the use of effective virtual learning programs (Virtual Virginia, multidivision online provider program, division-based virtual programs) to offer increased access to specialized curriculum and personalized, flexible instruction options to all students, regardless of geography or school division.

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Dr. Foley provided updates on the Multidivision Online Provider program.
- 2024 MOP Submission Window (Jan. 1-Feb. 1)
- One new MOP – Virtual Learning Academy (VLA)
- 68 Standards-based courses – new or revised
- 52 Elective courses
- 3 CTE courses

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Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director of Virtual VA provided updates on the program.
Virtual VA Updates – Dr. Brian Mott
- Dr. Mott provided information and updates on the program components: K-12 Instruction, Outreach Program, Professional Learning, and Summer School.

K-12 Instruction: Dr. Mott presented part-time and full-time student enrollment data from 2021-2024, global students. Summer Session: Enrollment continues to grow; Session I and II dates are listed on the Virtual Virginia website at www.virtualva.org.

Academic Year	Total Students	FT Online Students	%FT	PT Online Students	%PT
2023–2024*	13,790	2,465	18%	11,325	82%
2022-2023	14,162	1,866	13%	12,296	87%
2021-2022	29,710	8,788	30%	20,922	70%

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Dr. Foley reviewed the next sub-bullet of the Tech Plan:

- c. Design effective, flexible virtual learning professional development on data-focused instructional strategies and resources maximizing every student's learning experience and improving educational outcomes (attendance, testing, grades, AP scores).

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Dr. Foley gave an overview of the current virtual professional learning course entitled "Leveraging the Power of Virtual Learning".

- Offered to all Virginia educators – 18 hours
- Completers earn Certification Points and a Badge
- Engaging and interactive content
- 6 modules: What is Virtual Learning?; Engaging Successfully in a Virtual Environment; Communication, Collaboration, and Community; Online Engagement: Students, Families, and Community Stakeholders; Assessing Students; and Digital Citizenship

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Dr. Brian Mott provided information on professional learning opportunities currently in operation. Free training is offered for VA public educators; catalog of offerings is available; microcredentials are emerging. There has been growth with partnerships in the community. The top 5 PL opportunities are: Blended Learning Conference (2024), Statewide LMS Educator Credentials (Fall 2023 and Spring 2024), VDOE Teachers in Action (2024), and Statewide Technology Educator Credentials (2024). VVAAS enrollment is 795 with 97 new educators in FY24.

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Mr. Reggie Fox engaged the committee with the following questions.

Discuss any potential supports that VDOE may offer to enhance virtual learning USE throughout the Commonwealth. **A member commented that their school division engaged in utilizing the software applications provided for the All-in initiative. A question was asked about**

addressing challenging student environments with filling teacher positions related to substitutes. Responses included ways to provide long-term substitutes with access to the technology; one school division pairs substitutes with the same content teacher (mentor) and copy that teacher's content in the LMS for the substitute teacher to use. Other options are being explored to provide teachers with provisional licenses to assist and gain experience while obtaining permanent licenses. Dr. Mott stated that Virtual VA is filling some gaps where school divisions may need a teacher where critical shortages may occur.

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Virginia Educational Technology Plan – Ms. Calypso Gilstrap
Ms. Gilstrap introduced the 3rd tenet DESIGN. Implement high expectations for every learner using educational technologies explicitly designed into rigorous, best-in-class standards of learning.

   3.1 Develop and maintain instructionally sound implementation of all educational
   technology resources and systems.
   3.2 Implement a framework for education technology integration for all students.

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Computer Science Update – Ms. Keisha Tennessee
Ms. Tennesse provide information as follows on the CS implementation. The Board of Education shall establish a regular schedule, in a manner it deems appropriate, for the review, and revision as may be necessary, of the Standards of Learning in all subject areas. Such review of each subject area shall occur at least once every seven years. *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-253.13:1.

   • The 2024 Computer Science Revisions will allow students to take an active role
     in demonstrating competency, personalize their education, and progress towards
     workplace readiness. Virginia Computer Science Standards: Organized into six (6)
     content strands: Algorithms and Programming, Computing Systems, Cybersecurity, Data
     and Analysis, Impacts of Computing, and Networks and the Internet

Ms. Tennessee led an activity and discussion involving CS.

   • Activity requires 3 groups: Elementary (K-5), Middle School (6-8 and Middle School
     Elective), and High School (CSF, CSP, and PRG)
   • Each group will review the Proposed DRAFT standards and identify five important
     concepts and skills addressed in the standards and provide feedback on relevancy.

Finally, Ms. Tennessee provided reflections on CS instruction and implementation. These questions are to take back to school divisions and organizations for discussion.

   • What are initial thoughts concerning the proposed DRAFT 2024 Computer Science
     Standards of Learning?
   • What changes or additions should be considered for inclusion to meet the needs of all
     stakeholders and improve student outcomes?

- What additional supports and/or resources could the VDOE provide to better inform parents and community members about the computer science content included in the Computer Science Standards of Learning?
- Reflect upon these questions and the standards themselves and provide feedback using the Public Comment Form by **May 31, 2024**.

Slides 29-32

Instructional Technology Updates – Mr. Ryan Champney

Mr. Champney spoke about our Unified, Direct Access Approach for Design which includes, GoOpenVA, our Open Educational Resource Initiative, Virtual Virginia, a partner of VDOE which provides Canvas, our state's Learning Management System (LMS) and our VDOE website, which provides up to date education information throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Mr. Champney provided information about the Workforce Development initiative.
- Leveled, structured course - Multiple entry points
- Provides choice and flexibility – Facilitated & Asynchronous
- Includes experiential learning - Resource Hub, Creating a Course, or Virtual Conference Plan
- Issues a certificate/badge certifying successful completion

OETCI is also in charge of one of the VDOE's latest projects called ActiVAtED Learning which is a podcast series provided by the VDOE and in partnership with Virtual Virginia and PBS BlueRidge and in collaboration with the Virginia Society for Technology in Education, also known as VSTE. We wanted to make available to parents and educators.

Internet Safety: *2.3 Support students, educators, leaders, and families with resources for the purpose of advancing the goal of safe use of media and technology.*

a. Develop and recommend a model policy to better support the internet safety of all students and educators.
b. Model instructional practices and content on the safe use of media and technology by students and educators.
c. Integrate resources related to successful instructional practices, curricula, and other educator resources for the safe use of media and technology by students and educators.

Slides 33-34 were skipped due to time constraints

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The committee complimented OETCI for the creative and innovate ways that technology and virtual learning are being implemented in Virginia. Mr. Fox presented initial data from the Speak Up Survey that impacts instructional technology, virtual learning, and professional learning. He reminded members to encourage school divisions to complete the survey at https://projecttomorrow.questionpro.com/VAregistration23 by May 31st.

Administrators & Teachers
- 85% report having access and use of virtual learning through school division operated programs, Virtual VA and MOP.
- 89% report using virtual learning opportunities for professional growth.
- 83% stated ways to measure student engagement through student feedback, making connections with content, and active learning.

Students
- 90% have access to and use a variety of devices completing schoolwork.
- 80% report using technology to search for information, complete projects and take quizzes/tests.
- 65% face challenges when using technology with slow Internet connectivity and websites needed for instructional purposes are blocked.

Administrators, teachers, and students
- The effective use of technology helps the user to be in control of his/her own learning, fosters deep learning, and increases engagement.
- The most important skills to acquire by integrating technology are critical thinking, problem solving, and communication.

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The participants were given an opportunity to ask final questions prior to the close of the meeting. Public questions or comments may be sent to the mailbox virtualprograms@doe.virginia.gov until May 3rd, 2024. The meeting recording may be viewed at the VDOE YouTube channel at [Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) Meeting - YouTube.](#) Next steps will include scheduling the Fall virtual meeting based on the adopted policy voted by the VLAC. Meg Foley, and Mr. Reginald Fox all thanked the committee and VDOE participants for their participations in this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00noon.