



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item: M

Date: October 24, 2024

Title: First Review of Proposed State Approved Textbooks for 6-12 English

Presenter: Em Cooper, Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Purpose of Presentation

Action required by state or federal law or regulation.

Executive Summary

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) began the process to review English textbooks following the Board of Education’s approval on April 25, 2024. The Department followed a revised timeline for the State Approval Process for English (contained in Attachment 1) and the Textbook Criteria for English (contained in Attachment 2) to conduct the textbook review. In May 2024, publishers of the reviewed English textbooks submitted a Publisher’s Certification and Agreement form for each textbook being considered for approval by the Board of Education. VDOE staff members have reviewed the information included in each submitted Publisher’s Certification and Agreement form (blank version contained in Attachment 3).

In June 2024, committees of Virginia educators received the English textbook samples along with completed Grade 6-12 English *Standards of Learning* textbook correlations from publishers. All committee members participated in training sessions that addressed the protocols and components of the review process. Between June 2024-August 2024, members of these committees conducted individual analyses of the materials using the evaluation criteria for the Standards of Learning (SOL) correlation, content bias, and design for instructional planning and support. In September 2024, VDOE staff then aggregated the analyses of committee members and shared consensus evaluations with publishers. Publishers were given an opportunity to respond to the committees’ reviews and recommendations. Requests by publishers for reconsideration were examined carefully by VDOE staff, and staff members began preparing the list of proposed approved English textbooks for presentation to the Board.

Initially, seven publishers expressed interest in submitting secondary English Language Arts textbooks for consideration. One publisher did not pursue the process further.

The list of sixty proposed recommended English textbooks from five publishers, including the status of the Publisher’s Certification and Agreement forms for each, is included as Attachment 4. Two publishers withdrew seven textbooks that did not correlate to the 2024 *English Standards of Learning*. These are not included in Attachment 4.

Following the Board’s first review of the proposed textbooks, the VDOE will conduct a 30-day public comment period, with the intent to bring the Board a final list of proposed approved textbooks for 6-12 English in December 2024.

Action Requested

Action will be requested at a future meeting: December 3, 2024.

Superintendent’s Recommendation

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education receive for first review the attached list of proposed recommended textbooks for 6-12 English.

Previous Review or Action

Previous review or action. Specify date and action taken below in the following format:

Date: [April 25, 2024](#)

Action: [Written Report of English Textbook and Instructional Materials Approval Process Grades 6-12](#)

Background Information and Statutory Authority

The Board of Education’s authority for approving textbooks or other instructional materials is prescribed in the Constitution of Virginia ([Article VIII, § 2](#)) and in the [Code of Virginia](#) (applicable citations noted in Attachment 3). [Virginia’s Textbook Review Process](#) provides a comprehensive overview of the current textbook review process, along with the Regulations Governing Local School Boards and School Divisions.

Regulations Governing Local School Boards and School Divisions, 8 VAC 20-720 et seq. 8 VAC 20-720-179. Textbooks

A. Textbook approval

1. The Board of Education shall have the authority to approve textbooks for use in the public schools of Virginia.

2. Process modified as outlined in the Virginia Literacy Act (2022): In approving basal textbooks for reading in kindergarten and first grade, the Board shall report to local school boards those textbooks with a minimum decodability standard based on words that students can correctly read by properly attaching speech sounds to each letter to formulate the word at 70 percent or above for such textbooks, in accordance with § 22.1-239 of the Code of Virginia.
3. Any local school board may use textbooks not approved by the Board provided the school board selects such books in accordance with this chapter.
4. Contracts and purchase orders with publishers of textbooks approved by the Board for use in grades 6-12 shall allow for the purchase of printed textbooks, printed textbooks with electronic files, or electronic textbooks separate and apart from printed versions of the same textbook. Each school board shall have the authority to purchase an assortment of textbooks in any of the three forms listed above.

The current list of state-approved English textbooks was approved by the Board in 2018 following revisions to the *English Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework* in 2017. The Board of Education approved the 2024 *English Standards of Learning* in March 2024, which then prompted the need to review textbooks for correlation to the revised content. On April 25, 2024, The Board of Education received a report on the anticipated timeline for the review of secondary textbooks to align with the 2024 *English Standards of Learning*.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Upon acceptance of the list of proposed 6-12 English textbooks for first review by the Board of Education, a 30-day public comment period will open on October 25, 2024, via the [2024 English Textbook Review Process](#) webpage. The list of recommended 6-12 English textbooks will be presented to the Board of Education for final review on December 3, 2024.

Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:

This responsibility can be absorbed by the agency's existing resources at this time. If the agency is required to absorb additional responsibilities related to this process, other services will be impacted.