

Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2024; 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

[Virtual Learning Advisory Committee \(VLAC\) Meeting - YouTube.](#)

Mr. Reggie Fox provided a welcome to the Virtual Learning Advisory Committee meeting, also known as VLAC. Educational technology and virtual learning are important in the Commonwealth as we continue to provide enhanced learning experiences for students and teachers. 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 [absent]

(Designee: Mr. Ernest Longworth)

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

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

Dr. Tanya McDade, Region IV, Prince William Public Schools [absent]

(Designee: Dr. Stephanie Soliven)

Dr. Garrett Smith, Region V, Staunton Public Schools

(Designee: Mr. Tom Lundquist)

Mr. C. Dwayne Huff, Region VI, Craig County Schools

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, Educational Technology Specialist

Mr. Ryan Champney, Virtual Learning [At training]

Ms. Keisha Tennessee, Computer Science Coordinator

Dr. John Mustachio, eRate Coordinator for K-12 Education

The meeting proceeded with the agenda on the screen. Dr. Michele Wallace, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction to bring greetings and our purpose.

Success Story 1:

VA Educational Technology Plan – Access: Plan for scalable, sustainable technology infrastructure that can support current, innovative, and emerging technologies.

A video was shown as an example of access to a variety of innovative, applicable technologies.

- Prince Edward County Public Schools engages students with a digital anatomy table to show real segmented human anatomy.
- This is an advanced, highly technological dissection and visualization tool where students are able to see first-hand the anatomy of a human, layer by layer.

Calypso Gilstrap, our Associate Director of Educational Technology and Classroom Innovation had the opportunity to participate in the SETDA Conference recently and witnessed students sharing about their access to technology.

Dr. Meg Foley, Virtual Learning Coordinator and Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director of Virtual VA provided information related to the virtual learning programs.

The Committee discussed problem statements related to some of the important educational technology and virtual learning initiatives. The three groups provided feedback.

Problem Statement 1: Virginia schools must effectively leverage virtual learning programs to ensure all students meet the Commonwealth's graduation requirements, while addressing potential challenges and maximizing student success.

State the Problem/Question Clearly articulate the problem of practice. Ensure everyone in the group understands the issue and its significance.	<u>Group #1: Discussion</u> Generate a list of key terms, questions, potential solutions to the problem. Encourage creative thinking and consider a wide range of possibilities.	<u>Group #2: Implementation</u> Discuss and outline the steps needed to implement the solution(s). State specifics about implementation including strengths and challenges and	<u>Group #3: Action Plan & Evaluation</u> Share an action plan including the solutions, implementation, and how to evaluate.
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Feedback: The groups reported flexibility and leveraging online opportunities available crossing geographic boundaries. Communication is key; provide any necessary guidance and education to leaders.

Success Story 2:

VA Educational Technology Plan – Use: *Promote the use of a variety of innovative instructional strategies, practices, and resources developed with current, emerging, and accessible technology-based resources to support the innovative instructional approaches in the classroom.*

Examples were shared of student work from current courses in Virtual VA.

- Examples of active use of educational technology that foster engagement and collaboration in the classrooms.

- Students use a variety of innovative technologies and applications to expand their knowledge and skills.
- Students engage in personalized, deeper learning experiences that are enhanced through meaningful technology integration.

Calypso Gilstrap provided an overview of the Model Policy concerning Internet Safety.

Problem Statement 2: The Model Policy concerning Internet Safety must be refined to better balance student safety, privacy, and educational benefits, fostering a secure and productive online learning environment.

Feedback: Continue providing education, guidance, and resources, possibly a tiered approach to training. Relate policies as they relate to life skills, AUP, and other digital materials used.

Success Story 3:

VA Educational Technology Plan – Design: Implement high expectations for every learner using educational technologies explicitly designed into rigorous, best-in-class standards of learning.

Activated Learning, a Podcast produced by Blue Ridge PBS in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education and in collaboration with the Virginia Society for Technology in Education. In each episode, host Tom Landon, Director of Educational Innovation for Blue Ridge PBS, talks to leading educators about what gets them energized and excited as we tell stories of using technology to inspire student engagement.

<https://www.blueridgepbs.org/educational-resources/activated-learning/>

The example shown was about Washington County Public Schools Tech Trek program. The Tech Trek trailer travels the mountain roads of their rural county to bring state of the art digital learning opportunities to teachers and students.

- Two ITRT's, Andrew Smith and Thomas Larimer designed a mobile technology lab and created a trailer that contains drones, virtual reality and robotics equipment, and space to have students participate in engaging learning activities, such as science experiments, computer science activities, and others.
- One additional creative way that students were engaged is that the Technology Education Teacher partnered on this project to have the students assist with the design work and carpentry – flooring, walls, etc. This provided students with a real-world experience → “on the job training” where the practicum b

Keisha Tennessee, Computer Science Coordinator provided information on Digital Learning AI and Computer Science.

Problem Statement 3: Virginia schools must implement effective strategies to integrate Computer Science Standards of Learning into classrooms to equip students with the foundational knowledge and practical skills necessary for future careers in technology.

Feedback: Create natural connections between key terms and phrases. Continue awareness of standards, support systems, training, and resources available to school divisions.

Suggestion to continue highlighting exemplars and report any impact of the work as implementation occurs throughout the year.

Closing Activity: Reggie Fox surveyed the committee for Spring 2025 meeting topics. He provided two potential dates: April 28 or May 5 for the on-site meeting. The location is DARS, Henrico, VA. Mr. Fox thanked the committee and VDOE participants for their work in this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.