

MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
Committee on School and Division Accountability
Wednesday, April 21, 2015; 2:30 p.m.
Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building

Welcome and Opening Comments

The following Board of Education (Board) members were present for the April 21, 2015 Committee on School and Division Accountability meeting: Diane Atkinson; Christian Braunlich; Dr. Billy Cannaday, Jr.; James Dillard; Darla Edwards; Elizabeth Vickrey Lodal; Sal Romero, Jr.; and Joan Wodiska. Dr. Steven Staples, the superintendent of public instruction, was also present.

Mrs. Atkinson, chairman of the committee, convened the meeting and welcomed the Board members and guests.

Approval of Minutes from the February 25, 2015 Meeting

The minutes from the February 25, 2015 meeting were approved by the Committee after a motion to do so was made by Mrs. Lodal and seconded by Dr. Cannaday.

Approval of Minutes from the March 25, 2015 Meeting

The minutes from the March 25, 2015 meeting were approved by the Committee after a motion to do so was made by Mrs. Edwards and seconded by Mrs. Lodal.

Public Comment

There was no one present who wished to provide public comment.

Introductory Comments

As a Board, Mrs. Atkinson said they have used the February and March meetings for presentations that will provide them with the background information they need as they prepare to outline concepts for the comprehensive revisions to the State Report Card as well as the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (also known as the Standards of Accreditation or SOA) which includes the state accountability system tomorrow at the Board retreat. Today, the Committee will continue with those presentations. In February, the presentations focused primarily on the School Report Card. In March, they focused primarily on the SOA. The Board members have already identified some areas where they will discuss revisions, such as multiple measures for accreditation, inclusion of growth in the accountability system, gradation of accreditation labels, a multiple-year accreditation design, graduation requirements, inclusion of competency for the standard credit, and report card components.

Consideration for Multiple Measures

Ace Parsi, project director for Deeper Learning at the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) presented information regarding this topic. His presentation goals were to:

- Describe and discuss a foundation of 21st century learning for report card measures, school accreditation, and competency-based systems
- Identify state practices in multiple measure accountability systems that align to a 21st century learning system
- Identify research-based criteria for the state to consider in guiding discussion

As part of his presentation, he discussed the Illinois Report Card, New Hampshire's PACE Accountability System, and Georgia's College and Career Readiness Performance Index as well as other issues.

At the end of Mr. Parsi's presentation, Board discussion followed and Mr. Parsi answered questions raised by its members.

Mrs. Atkinson and other Board members thanked him for the presentation.

Presentation by Representatives of Higher Education: College Ready – Dispositions Needed for a Successful College Experience

Peter Blake, director of the State Council of High Education for Virginia (SCHEV), Dr. Luke Schulthesis, vice provost for strategic enrollment management at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and Dr. Glenn DuBois, chancellor for the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), presented information for this agenda item.

Peter Blake spoke about expectations at the higher education level. He said the challenge before the Board is to determine what is required to be college-ready. He commended the Board for thinking about this issue again as it does need to be reviewed periodically. He said, at an informal meeting, which included presidents of universities and community colleges; deans from schools of education; and school superintendents, this issue was discussed and they came up with a short list that they will pursue with Dr. Staples, including the non-academic preparation for college-readiness (e.g., maturity, a work ethic, discipline, study habits, and knowing how to manage one's life as a college student).

Dr. Schulthesis also spoke about college readiness and focused on several issues. He noted that some students are focusing on admission to one school and this causes problems when the student is not accepted at that school. Underserved students tend to do this. He said mathematics also is an issue across the country in higher education and prepares students not just for careers in the sciences, but advanced mathematics at the college level may be necessary in other areas. In certain soft skills areas there may be room for some attention helping students identify general career areas, course requirements, and institutions of higher education they are interested in attending. In addition, industry is telling them that they are looking for the following in students: the ability to work as a member of a team, to problem-solve, and to display effective written

and verbal communication. They are also finding wonderful students who have not discussed college with their families. When this happens late in the application process, these students may not be able to get the financial aid they need. Discussion of this process at an earlier age will help these students. End-of-course examinations have no bearing on college admissions. A student's grade point average has the greatest impact and at some institutions standardized test scores or IB and AP test scores may have an impact. They have found that the student's grade point average has the strongest correlation to retention.

Dr. DuBois discussed an offer he has proposed to Dr. Staples. At this time half of the students who come to the community college system with a standard diploma will require remediation courses. On behalf of that system, he offered to permit the public schools to use the community college readiness assessments in mathematics, reading, and writing at no cost to the public school systems. Students who fail to meet the requirements would then receive remediation while enrolled in public schools. He suggested that the two systems work together proactively to identify these problems and resolve these issues before the students leave high school. Dr. Sharon Morrissey then provided the Board with additional information about the Virginia Placement Test, which the community college system uses to determine if a student is college ready. This test was developed for Virginia's community college system after it was determined that the tests previously used were poorly placing their students. This test diagnoses the student's remediation needs. She proposed some possibilities to the Board for their consideration. She proposed that this test only be given to rising juniors because it would give them time to improve in problematic areas. In addition, they recommend that the test be given to high school students scheduled to receive a standard diploma as part of this project. Dr. DuBois said a net result of these discussions could be a much better alignment between the public schools and the community college system.

At the end of the presentation, Board members raised questions and discussion followed.

Mrs. Atkinson thanked the participants for their presentations.

CTE Competency-Based Approach

Lolita Hall, director of the Department's Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE), and Kris Martini, director of the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education for Arlington County Public Schools, presented for this agenda item. Anne Rowe, department coordinator for curriculum and instruction; George Willcox, department coordinator for planning, administration, and accountability; and Kevin Riley, administrative coordinator for the Virginia CTE Resource Center - Henrico County Public Schools, were also present.

Ms. Hall provided background information about competency-based education (CBE), including terms and acronyms used in the industry. She also described the five essential elements of CBE and other desirable characteristics of CBE programs. Mr. Martini provided an overview of how CBE is implemented through CTE in Arlington.

Board members asked questions at the end of the presentations and discussion followed.

Discussion Regarding End-of-Course Tests in Virginia

Shelley Loving-Ryder, assistant superintendent for student assessment and school improvement, provided the Committee with the historical background as well as the context for the decision to use end-of-course tests. Ms. Loving-Ryder said Virginia began with minimum competency tests in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This was followed by the Literacy Passport Tests which were considered an improvement over the minimum competency tests, but later lost favor. Revised Standards of Learning (SOL) were adopted in 1995 and plans for the SOL testing program began in 1996. The end-of-course (EOC) testing began in 1998. By regulation, the EOC test scores are not included on a student's school transcript so a college or university would have no way of knowing what scores a student had unless it asked for them outside of the transcript. In addition, the EOC tests are used to determine school accreditation ratings and in the federal accountability process.

Board member questions and discussion followed the presentation. Ms. Atkinson thanked Ms. Loving-Ryder for the presentation.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Mrs. Atkinson concluded the meeting by reminding the members that tomorrow they will look at where they would like to focus their changes in the SOA. She said it is her hope that the presentations from the last three months have informed the members for the work ahead. As the Board considers changes, it will need to be mindful of the potential cost impact and any unintentional consequences. The Board also will need to be mindful of the issue of local capacity. In addition, the stakeholder groups can be very helpful, and she encouraged them to reach out to the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.