THE VIRGINIA APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL MINUTES

The Virginia Apprenticeship Council met on Friday, March 27, 2026.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dudley Harris, Chair
Patrick Dean
Dr. Latitia McCane
Nicole Overley
Meghan Hurt
Steve Masterson
Grant Shmelzer
Jim Frederick
Doris Crouse-Mays
Dr. Anthony Williams
Dr. Jason Williams
Michelle Ramaker
Laura McClintock
Douglas Straley

STAFF PRESENT:

Nicholas Toth, Deputy Commissioner
Dr. Rob Walker, Director of Service Delivery
Faith Clayton, Registered Apprenticeship Region Supervisor
Diana Lyons, Registered Apprenticeship Region Supervisor
Tereza Edwards, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Diana Leyva, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Andrew Johnson, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Clayton Duvall, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Miguel Granillo, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Kara Joyce, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Pedro Ortiz, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Karen Rhodes, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Susan Reyes, Register Apprenticeship Consultant
Anna Hughes, Project Manager, SAEF Grant
Maynard Stowe, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
Alice Weathers, Registered Apprenticeship Consultant
James Edmunds, Program Support Technician
Cierra Morgan, Program Support Technician

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chair Dudley Harris called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed the council members.

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Chair Dudley Harris reminded the council that this meeting was a two-part meeting and that the meeting was moving to a different building at 10:00am to join with the Virginia Board of Workforce Development for a joint meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

December 2025 meeting minutes were approved through voice vote with no objections.

OLD BUSINESS:
Deputy Commissioner Nick Toth informed the council that that were not any significant updates on the regulatory documents regarding Registered Apprenticeship within Virginia Works. He encouraged the council members to reach out to Skip Maupai if they had any questions about the regulatory documents or regulations. The was a motion made the table to documents until next meeting and this was approved through a voice vote.

Chair Dudley Harris informed the council that new reciprocity agreement was accepted. At the last meeting, council members were asked to send any comments/suggestions to Virginia Works. No comments or suggestions were received so the new reciprocity agreement was accepted.

Lasty, Chair Harris brought up the Journeyworker to apprentice ratio issues and asked that the VAC create a workgroup to discuss in more detail. He asked four members of the council to volunteer for the work group and there were five volunteers. They are Patrick Dean, Steve Masterson, Grant Schmelzer, Dr Jason Williams, and Meghan Hurt. Chair Harris also asked for Virginia Works staff to be present, and Deputy Commissioner Nicholas Toth was volunteered by Nicole Overly. Chair Harris stated that his main goal with this work group was to increase apprenticeship and maintain safety.

NEW BUSINESS:

REPORT - Division of Registered Apprenticeship (Virginia Works):
Nicholas Toth, Deputy Commissioner of Virginia Works, gave the following report on behalf of Virginia Works:

Introductions and Staffing Updated:
Deputy Commissioner Toth informed the Council that Jason Clark (former Director of Work-Based Learning) has retired. Virginia Works is currently in the process of searching for a new director. The title of the role is going to change to the "Director of Registered Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning" as to emphasize the importance of Registered Apprenticeship.

Appointment of Vice Chair:

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Chair Dudley Harris stated that during the first meeting of every calendar year, the VAC must vote on a new Vice Chair. Grant Schmelzer and Patrick Dean were nominated, and Grant Schmelzer was approved though a voice vote.

Deputy Commissioner Toth presented the updated RA scorecard to the VAC. He stated that he did not have any additional details to provide for the council. Commissioner Overley informed the VAC that Virginia Works continues to look for feedback on the RA scorecard (not just related to data and insights, but also to the layout). Dr Anthony Williams from DOE stated that the section labeled "Top Ten CTE Occupations" are not necessarily the occupations, but more so the related program participants. The number is reflective of the number of students enrolled in the courses and programs. Virginia Works will connect with the Department of Education prior to the next council meeting to iron out the details of this specific section of the RA Scorecard. Some members of the council requested data specific to regions and Commissioner Overley informed them that the RA Dashboard would be the best place to find this information (https://virginiaworks.gov/registered-apprenticeship-dashboard/).

Deputy Commissioner Toth updated the Council on Pre-Apprenticeship. He stated that he did not have any significant updates, but Virginia Works is working on a pre-apprenticeship policy (since we defined pre-apprenticeship last meeting).

Commissioner Overley informed the Council that National Apprenticeship Week is going to be from April 27, 2026 – May 1, 2026, and that RA is planning several events during this week.

At this time, Chair Harris called a vote to end the meeting. The Virginia Apprenticeship Council left to go join the joint meeting with the Virginia Board of Workforce Development where they would continue.

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REPORTS:

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations (DPOR):
Laura McClintock, the Director of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations, did not have a report to present to the council.

Virginia Community College System (VCCS):
Dr Angela Lawhorm, the director of career education programs and workforce partnerships with the system office, provided the following written report to the council:

New Registered Apprenticeship Initiatives:
Tidewater Community College just added as an Intermediary.

Launch of the VCCS Work-Based Learning Tracking System (WTS).

Registered Apprenticeship Issues:
Gaining interests of employers to participate in RAPs (some employers engage in unregistered apprenticeships or other types of WBL due to paperwork or commitment).

Integrating RAPIDS and other WBL platforms with the WTS.

Action/Assistance Needed from the Council:

- In your past experiences, what have you heard were the major benefits for employers from starting and participating in RAPs? I'm aware of retention and growing talent, but what really sold it?
- How have employers' concerns been eased and what information was provided to them?
- What materials and resources exist to increase intermediaries?

Actions/Assistance Needed from Virginia Works:

- What other resources exist to support increasing RAPs in Virginia?
- How can Virginia's community colleges utilize resources and partnerships with other state agencies for shared messaging, triaging of employer needs to determine the best WBL experience for them, and sharing of WBL successes?
- How can we better position WBL experiences to become potential job opportunities?

Department of Education (DOE):
Dr. Anthony Williams, Director, Office of Career and Technical Education, provided the following report to the Council on behalf of the Virginia Department of Education:

On December 31, 2025, the VDOE published the CTE High-quality Work-based Learning Implementation Guide which provides a comprehensive framework to help school divisions effectively integrate meaningful, real-world learning experiences into CTE programs. The Implementation Guide identifies registered apprenticeship as one of the approved types of High-Quality Work-Based Learning and outlines the expectations, required documentation, and time-based credit alignment schools must follow when coordinating related technical instruction and on-the-job training experiences.

- Announcing the Career and Technical Education (CTE) High-Quality Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide (docx) - Memo 304-25, December 31, 2025

Overview:
The Board of Education has defined a High-quality Work-based Learning experience as a school-coordinated experience within the workforce that includes sustained engagement with industry professionals in high-demand fields in which students apply coursework learning to a real-world setting while at the same time building critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creative thinking, and citizenship skills (Virginia's 5 Cs). Students practice their technical skills and durable skills on a sustained basis, and these experiences accelerate learning toward the goal of earning a national certificate of completion, an industry recognized credential, and/or attain postsecondary credit; and receive feedback and guidance through mentoring and supervision from industry professionals. CTE High-quality Work-based Learning experiences include clinical experiences, entrepreneurship, internship, registered apprenticeship, school-based enterprise, and select immersion supervised agricultural experiences. Additionally, each experience will go through a certification process to ensure it meets the criteria for high quality. The VDOE Office of Career and Technical Education will use the criteria outlined below to certify WBL experiences as high quality.

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High-quality Work-based Learning has been integrated into the School Performance and Support Framework (SPSF): 3E Readiness and remains a graduation requirement in Virginia. The SPSF 3E Readiness framework assigns value to High-quality Work-based Learning experiences based on their rigor and relevance to postsecondary outcomes, using workforce, military, and educational attainment data to guide its design. Points are awarded when students complete High-quality Work-based Learning experiences.

3E Readiness Framework:
The 3E Readiness Framework is a comprehensive approach to accountability designed to prepare high school students for success in one of three postsecondary pathways: employment, enlistment, or enrollment in higher education.

High-quality Work-based Learning Graduation Requirement:
Per § 22.1253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia, students are required to:

(i) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, International Baccalaureate, or dual enrollment course; or
(ii) (ii) **complete a high-quality work-based learning experience, as defined by the Board**; or earn a career and technical education credential that has been approved by the Board.

The Virginia Department of Education asked the Council (and Virginia Works) with help on the Identification and removal of barriers for pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeships that may limit participation of secondary students under the age of 18.

Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI):
Jim Frederick, Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry, gave the following report to the Virginia Apprenticeship Council on behalf of DOLI:

Commissioner Frederick invited all members of the Virginia Apprenticeship Council to attend the VOSH (Virginia Occupational Safety and Health) Conference in September. The conference will take place at the Newport News Marriot at City Center from September 16-18, 2026. The annual conference features over 30 engaging education sessions, innovative exhibitors, and endless opportunities to connect with top Safety and Health professionals. The registration information for this event will be on the DOLI website soon.

Commissioner Frederick also informed the Council that DOLI will announce a contest later in the year for high school students (young workers) to create a submit videos about workplace safety. He also stated that promotion of the contest would be greatly appreciated.

Lastly, Commissioner Frederick updated the Council on regulatory guidance documents. At the last VAC meeting, DOLI reported on the ongoing work of relocating 19 Townhall guidance documents related to the Registered Apprenticeship program from DOLI to Virginia Works. The documents have been successfully migrated and can be found on the Townhall website under the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (Virginia Works) (https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/GDocs.cfm?BoardID=171).

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COUNCIL COMMENTS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chair Harris announced the meetings dates for 2026.

June 25th, 2026
September 24th, 2026
December 3rd, 2026

Chair Harris thanked the Council, and all in attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

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Dudley Harris, Chair
Nicole Overly, Commissioner and Secretary