

**Virginia Board of Education
Committee on Evidence-Based Policymaking
Thursday July 26, 2018
12:15 p.m.
Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building
101 North 14th Street, Richmond, Virginia**

Welcome and Opening Comments

The following Board of Education (Board) members were present for the July 26, 2018, meeting of the committee on evidence-based policymaking: Ms. Kim Adkins (chair); Mrs. Diane Atkinson; Dr. Jamelle Wilson, Mrs. Elizabeth Lodal, Ms. Anne Holton and Mr. Daniel Gecker. Dr. James F. Lane, superintendent of public instruction was also present.

Ms. Adkins, chair of this committee, convened the meeting at 12:15 p.m. and provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

Approval of the Minutes from the June 27, 2018 Committee Meeting

Dr. Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 27, 2018 committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Atkinson and carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Adkins opened the floor to public comment.

Ms. Donna Sayegh, constituent from Portsmouth, VA and candidate for Portsmouth City School Board, provided public comment on teacher equity.

Overview of Committee Progress to Date

Ms. Adkins provided an overview of the committee's progress to date. A copy of her presentation is available on the committee's website at [Committee on Evidence-Based Policymaking](#). The committee agreed that their focus areas would be:

- Teacher quality and development
- Students' access to high-quality teachers

The committee reached consensus on the definition of equity which is for students to receive the resources they need to be successful.

The committee employed the Education Trust's framework for access to strong teachers to advance their charge. The framework says that state leaders must:

- Be transparent;

- Set clear improvement expectations;
- Target resources;
- Develop networks; and
- Break down silos.

The committee will utilize the Board's five levers of action, which include to:

- Issue guidance;
- Amend or create regulations;
- Request changes to the *Code of Virginia*;
- Request funding from the General Assembly; and
- Convene conferences, training, and alliances.

The committee discussed immediate next steps for consideration, which include to:

- Share research on the importance of teacher recruitment, retention, distribution and best practices in these areas
- Review and revise the Standards of Quality, through the SOQ committee, for additional target resources and other advocacy-related policies
- Develop strategies for the Board's consideration to be more engaged in educating legislators on the changing demographics in our local school divisions and the necessity of additional, targeted resources

Update on Committee Member Research

Diane Atkinson, committee member, provided a presentation on diversifying the teacher workforce. Mrs. Atkinson volunteered to conduct a research on diversifying the teacher workforce. Her research is based on information from the *Learning Policy Institute: Diversifying the Teaching Profession Through High-Retention Pathways (July 2018)*, Desiree Carver-Thomas. A copy of Mrs. Atkinson's presentation is available on the committee's webpage at [Diversifying the Teacher Workforce](#).

Mrs. Atkinson reported research illustrates the importance of greater teacher diversity because of the substantial benefits teachers of color provide to all students and to students of color in particular. More teachers of color are being recruited than in years past, however their turnover rates are higher due to inadequate preparation and mentoring, poor teaching conditions, and displacement from the high-need schools in which they teach.

Studies have found that teachers of color boost the academic performance of students of color. Teachers' influences include improved reading and mathematics test scores, improved graduation rates, and increased aspirations to attend college. Students of color also experience social-emotional and nonacademic benefits to having teachers of color, such as fewer unexcused absences and lower likelihoods of chronic absenteeism and suspension. Students of color and

white students also report having positive perceptions of their teachers of color, including feeling cared for and academically challenged. Teachers of color are a resource for students in hard-to-staff schools. Many teachers of color are called to teach in low-income communities of color, positions that are often difficult to fill. Teachers of color comprise an increasing share of the U.S. teacher workforce. They were 20% of the teacher workforce in 2015–16, up from just 12% 30 years ago. The population of teachers of color as a collective group is growing; however, black and Native American teachers are declining.

Mrs. Atkinson shared that black teachers made up more than 8% of teachers in 1987 but made up 6.7% in 2015. Native American teachers declined from 1.1% in 1987 to 0.4% in 2015. Meanwhile, the percentage of Latino teachers has increased from 2.9% of teachers in 1987 to 8.8% in 2015. Although this group of teachers is growing steeply, the gap between the percentage of Latino teachers and students is larger than for any other racial or ethnic group.

Mrs. Atkinson reported that recruitment and retention is a result of high turnover rates as teachers move to other schools and leaving the profession have more than offset the successful recruitment of teachers of color in recent years. High teacher turnover rates exacerbate teacher shortages because inexperienced and underprepared teachers, who have some of the highest turnover rates, are often hired to replace those who leave, resulting in a “revolving door” of teachers. Higher turnover rates among teachers of color disproportionately impact students of color and students in poverty because teachers of color are more likely to serve these groups of students.

Teachers of color are also more likely to enter teaching through alternative certification pathways in which they complete teacher licensure requirements while teaching instead of beforehand. An example would be the teacher switcher program.

Some of the barriers to enrollment in and completion of high-quality teacher preparation programs are: rising cost of tuition/student loans, lack of support, family responsibilities, lack of exposure to college-level coursework in high school, students’ dissatisfaction with college environments that offer little faculty diversity or do not reflect their culture or experience and teacher licensure exams, play a key role in limiting both the recruitment and retention of teachers of color.

Possible policy recommendations that can both encourage more students of color to pursue teaching and do so through high-retention pathways that can better prepare teachers of color for successful, long-term teaching careers are:

- Service scholarships and loan forgiveness programs
- Teacher residency programs

- Grow Your Own programs
- Course articulation agreements and “2+2” partnerships
- Teacher preparation accreditation and licensure policies
- Ongoing mentoring and support

Encourage Teacher Residency Programs:

- Support for candidates of color and encourage their retention can be done through subsidizing the cost of teacher preparation
- Service scholarship, grant, and loan forgiveness programs cover or reimburse a portion of tuition costs in exchange for a commitment to teach in high-need schools or subject areas, typically for 3 to 5 years. These programs tend to be more effective when they cover a significant portion of educational costs
- Grow your own programs may reach out to high school students, paraprofessionals, after-school program staff, or other community members and support them financially as they complete preparation programs, in exchange for the candidates returning to teach in their communities. Mrs. Atkinson included some examples in her presentation.
- Teacher preparation programs can improve recruitment efforts by partnering with community colleges to create degree articulation agreements so that candidates can begin preparing to teach in a local community college and fully transfer their credits to a 4-year program where they will complete their preparation

States can increase enrollments of candidates of color by implementing data monitoring policies that report on and reward teacher preparation programs for greater diversity. Review of teacher recruitment and retention strategies identified several hiring conditions associated with effectively recruiting and retaining teachers, including timing of hiring, information in the hiring process, and licensure and pension portability.

The committee thanked Mrs. Atkinson for her presentation.

Discussion of Committee Recommendations and Next Steps

Ms. Adkins provided a general mapping of presentations to date that occurred during the committee meetings to highlight consistent themes that were developed throughout.

Ms. Adkins stated that attracting and retaining quality teachers as a profession and engaging the business community will not only directly address the teacher shortage issue, but also impact student achievement for all students (equity).

Dr. Lane encouraged the committee to think about the elements they would like to see reported as part of that lever.

As the committee's moves down the path to formalize recommendations by February 2019, the committee should be encouraged to retain flexibility for local school divisions by providing guidance and advocating for additional funding and supports.

Mrs. Atkinson requested to receive additional information on the praxis performance assessment, and the state's loan forgiveness programs. Ms. Holton would like to see data on the usage of the loan forgiveness program.

Mrs. Atkinson discussed the impact of teacher turnover on local school divisions. She stated that often local school divisions are interested in alternative paths for teachers but those need to be paired with mentoring programs. Mrs. Atkinson also requested to receive more information on mentoring programs that work well.

Dr. Wilson encouraged the committee to look at a variety of mentoring programs from a wide variety of divisions.

Board members expressed interested in learning more about the teacher evaluation process. Dr. Lane specified that more information would be reported at a later date. Mrs. Atkinson suggested that the committee look at the development of the Profile of a Virginia Educator before the teacher evaluation process. Dr. Lane shared that the agency is in the process of development now and encouraged the committee to share ideas.

Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Ms. Adkins asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Wilson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Lodal. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.