

**Virginia Board of Education**  
**Special Committee to Review the Standards of Accreditation**  
**Wednesday, July 22, 2020**  
**2:00 p.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Welcome and Opening Comments**

Pursuant to Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, the Virginia Board of Education (Board) convened in a virtual meeting of the Special Committee to Review the Standards of Accreditation (SOA) on June 22, 2020 at 2p.m. The meeting was open to the public via livestream on the [Virginia Department of Education \(VDOE\) YouTube webpage](#).

The following Board members were present for the meeting: Pamela Davis-Vaught, Dr. Francisco Durán, Dr. Keisha Pexton, and Dr. Jamelle Wilson. Dr. James Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Emily Webb, Director of Board relations for VDOE, were also present.

Dr. Pexton, chair of this committee, convened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed Board members and staff to the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Davis-Vaught made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2020 and June 18, 2020 meetings of the Special Committee to Review the Standards of Accreditation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Wilson and carried unanimously.

**Continued Discussion of the Committee's Work Plan**

Dr. Pexton reviewed the draft objectives of the committee, as proposed in the committee's June meeting. The committee revised the objective to read as follows: 1) conduct review of newly implemented accreditation systems to assess anticipated positive, negative, and unintended outcomes of performance indicators; and 2) conduct initial "pulse check" of criteria used when selecting accreditation indicators.

Dr. Wilson asked what data or information VDOE is collecting regarding the criteria used for accreditation and accreditation indicators. Dr. Lane answered that VDOE is collecting data related to all accreditation indicators, and staff would present data at future committee meetings based on committee's interest.

Dr. Pexton asked about the two indicators that were considered, but not chosen, as accreditation indicators in 2017: student discipline and school climate. Ms. Webb noted that data on school discipline and school climate was not available at the time the accreditation indicators were selected. Ms. Webb suggested that VDOE staff could present data that has been collected on these indicators since 2017.

Dr. Lane stated that Virginia's accreditation model is outcome-based, whereas many other states utilize an input-based model. He encouraged committee members to consider minimum expectations for instructional programs as well as outcome-based indicators in their review of the SOA.

Dr. Durán suggested that the committee examine the positive, negative, and unintended consequences of the current accreditation system before discussing any new accreditation indicators.

### **Follow-up Discussion of Topic Areas for Review and Consideration by the Special Committee and Presentations for August Meeting**

Ms. Webb suggested inviting the Education Commission of the States (ECS) to present on what other states are using for accreditation. Committee members expressed support for this idea.

Ms. Davis-Vaught asked for more information on how the current accreditation system has affected the most vulnerable populations in the Commonwealth. She emphasized that data on pre-kindergarten through third grade students is of particular importance.

Dr. Pexton asked how the committee could engage with stakeholders. Ms. Webb suggested hosting panels of principals or teachers to speak on issues of interest to the committee. Ms. Webb also suggested soliciting public comment from targeted groups, such as education-based advocacy organizations.

Dr. Wilson suggested that the committee's first priority should be the examination of the positive, negative, and unintended outcomes of each accreditation indicator.

Dr. Durán clarified that the committee's review of accreditation is not specific to the COVID pandemic, and emphasized that this should be made clear in all of the committee's work.

Dr. Wilson requested presentations by VDOE staff members regarding the work being done at the agency around accreditation and equity. Ms. Davis-Vaught requested presentations from communities with high poverty, English Learner populations, and transitional families.

### **Initial Discussion of Committee's Philosophy, Goals, Objectives and Student Achievement Expectations**

Dr. Pexton asked if the complexity of the accreditation system is an issue that the committee should include in its work. Dr. Wilson suggested that the complexity of the system may be addressed as an unintended consequence. Ms. Webb suggested that ECS could present information on the complexity of Virginia's accreditation system as compared to systems in other states. Ms. Webb also suggested the committee examine how the state accreditation system is aligned with the federal accreditation requirements.

Committee members discussed the matrix-based structure of the current accreditation system. Shelley Loving-Ryder, assistant superintendent, explained that at the time of the adoption of the current accreditation system in 2017, the Board was interested in a system where each indicator was evaluated separately and no overall accreditation rating was assigned. However, due to numerous references in the *Code of Virginia* to “accredited schools,” the Board decided an overall accreditation rating was necessary.

Dr. Pexton asked if committee members are interested in considering competency-based assessments as opposed to age-based assessments. Dr. Wilson suggested broadening the topic to examine other models or structures that may be useful in helping schools achieve in different ways.

Dr. Lane encouraged committee members to review, prior to the committee’s next meeting, the following subsections of the SOA:

- [8VAC20-131-10](#) (Purpose)
- [8VAC20-131-20](#) (Philosophy, goals, and objectives)
- [8VAC20-131-30](#) (Student achievement expectations)

Ms. Webb announced that the next scheduled committee meeting will be held virtually on August 27, 2020 at 10am.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.