

**REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Commonwealth Educational Roundtable

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 6

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2008**



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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January 2, 2008

The Honorable Phillip A. Hamilton
The House of Delegates of Virginia
P.O. Box 1585
Newport News, Virginia 23601

Ms. Laura Wilborn
Division of Legislative Automated Systems
General Assembly Building
910 Capital Square
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Delegate Hamilton and Ms. Wilborn:

On behalf of the Board of Education, I am pleased to submit the report on the Commonwealth Educational Roundtable pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 622 of the 2007 General Assembly. The resolution required that the Board of Education provide a report of the progress of the Commonwealth Educational Roundtable to the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

If you have questions or require additional information relative to this transmittal, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Patty Pitts, (804) 371-2522, Patty.Pitts@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.

BKCKjr/psp

Enclosure



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Report to the Virginia
General Assembly

***COMMONWEALTH
EDUCATIONAL ROUNDTABLE***

NOVEMBER 29, 2007

VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL ROUNDTABLE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2007 General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution 622 requesting the Board of Education to establish and regularly convene a *Commonwealth Educational Roundtable* to facilitate the implementation and continuation of efforts to improve and sustain quality educational leadership in the Commonwealth's public schools.

The resolution stipulated that membership should include, but need not be limited to, state agency leaders in public and higher education, representatives of educational leadership organizations, and other such individuals and organizations as the Board and the Superintendent may deem appropriate. In conducting its work, the *Roundtable* shall, among other things, (i) monitor the implementation of revisions to licensure of principals and preparation program regulations; (ii) continue to review and evaluate the policy environment for educational leadership; (iii) communicate regularly with the Board of Education about any relevant findings, with recommendations for any regulatory action; and (iv) provide a forum for educational leaders to report the challenges and effects of their work.

The resolution required that the Board of Education submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and a report of its progress in meeting the requests of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary and report shall be submitted for publication as a report document as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's Web site.

On behalf of the Board of Education, the president of the Board appointed the *Commonwealth Educational Roundtable* members. Dr. William C. Boshier, Jr., executive director and distinguished professor of education and public policy at Virginia Commonwealth University's Education and Policy Institute, serves as chair of the *Roundtable*.

The membership of the *Roundtable* includes deans of colleges and universities, principals, a school division central office director, representatives from professional organizations, members of the Virginia General Assembly, a member of the Board of Education, the executive director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The first meeting of the *Roundtable* was held on October 30, 2007, in Richmond, Virginia.

COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL ROUNDTABLE

BACKGROUND

The General Assembly and the Board of Education have articulated in the Standards of Quality (§ 22.1-253.13:5 B) that "leadership is essential for the advancement of public education in the Commonwealth." The 1999 Regular Session of the General Assembly enacted the Education Accountability and Quality Enhancement Act, which among other things, directed the Board of Education to amend leadership standards for superintendents and principals that would "include training in the implementation of the Standards of Learning and training in the evaluation and documentation of teacher and administrator performance based on student academic progress and the skills and knowledge of instructional personnel."

Echoing this priority is the December 2003 report of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, *Review of Factors and Practices Associated with School Performance in Virginia*, stating that strong leadership provided by the school principal is critical to the academic success of students, and the Standards of Accreditation (8 VAC 20-131-210), which acknowledge the principal as the "instructional leader of the school."

More than five years ago the Commonwealth joined 14 other states in a multimillion dollar mission to improve leadership in public schools, the State Action for Educational Leadership Project (SAELP), a grants initiative created by the Wallace Foundation to assist states in the development and implementation of policies and laws designed to enhance the capacity of school principals and superintendents to improve student performance. To support this initiative, the 2002 Regular Session of the General Assembly created a 21-member Joint Commission to Review, Study and Reform Educational Leadership (House Joint Resolution No. 20 and Senate Joint Resolution No. 58) to "evaluate the policy environment for educational leadership" as well as propose appropriate statutory and regulatory changes based on its review and research.

Complementing the work of the legislative Commission was a Task Force to Evaluate and Redesign Preparation Programs and Professional Development for School Leaders, led by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Executive Director of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Supported by many of the Task Force recommendations, the legislative Commission ultimately adopted more than 20 recommendations that addressed, among other things, (i) guidelines for mentorships and internships for school administrators; (ii) revision of licensure requirements for principals to require passage of the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA); and (iii) review of potential alternative licensure routes and a two-tiered licensure system. Some of these recommendations have already resulted in statutory changes addressing school leaders, while others were promulgated by the Board of Education as regulations addressing licensure and preparation programs for principals.

Supporting the development of effective school leaders in the Commonwealth are competitive grants for school divisions, first provided by the 2004 Regular Session of the General Assembly as five \$100,000 awards in each year of the biennium to school divisions entering into partnerships with Virginia institutions of higher education or other entities "for a defined

leadership development training program that addresses the leadership standards established for such training as defined by the Board of Education. The leadership training grants were continued in the 2006-2008 biennial budget, again demonstrating the Commonwealth's commitment to effective educational leadership in Virginia's public schools.

The 2007 General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution 622 requesting the Board of Education to establish and regularly convene a *Commonwealth Educational Roundtable* to facilitate the implementation and continuation of efforts to improve and sustain quality educational leadership in the Commonwealth's public schools. The resolution stipulated that membership should include, but need not be limited to, state agency leaders in public and higher education, representatives of educational leadership organizations, and other such individuals and organizations as the Board and the Superintendent may deem appropriate.

In conducting its work, the *Roundtable* shall, among other things, (i) monitor the implementation of revisions to licensure of principals and preparation program regulations; (ii) continue to review and evaluate the policy environment for educational leadership; (iii) communicate regularly with the Board of Education about any relevant findings, with recommendations for any regulatory action; and (iv) provide a forum for educational leaders to report the challenges and effects of their work. The resolution required that the Board of Education submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and a report of its progress in meeting the requests of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary and report shall be submitted for publication as a report document as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's Web site.

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ADVANCING VIRGINIA'S LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Virginia received a Grant from the Wallace Foundation providing funding to "Advance Virginia's Leadership Agenda." The work of the contract issued by the Virginia Department of Education is to be guided by the *Commonwealth Educational Roundtable*.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was disseminated to solicit proposals from Virginia public institutions of higher education with approved administration and supervision programs to meet the following three major objectives to support Virginia's goal of establishing a statewide Cohesive Learning-centered Leadership System:

1. Review, strengthen, and align the standards for school leaders in Virginia;
2. Identify indicators for standards that address the levels of school leaders—entry-level principals and high-performing principals; and
3. Develop guidance in the verification of the Level II administration and supervision endorsement as set forth in the *Regulations Governing the Licensure of School Personnel* and describe effective models of induction for beginning school leaders that reflect well aligned state and district leadership standards; leadership training that is closely tied to these standards; and district support systems that demonstrate responsiveness to the job conditions, needs, and learning goals of districts, especially low performing districts.

To engage statewide participation, the work is to be completed with statewide representation, including, but not limited to, representatives from Virginia college and university approved administration and supervision programs; school leaders from urban, suburban, rural, and low performing schools; representation from professional organizations, and Department of Education officials. The collaborative and cooperative arrangements among all partners were to be clearly identified in the proposals.

Proposals were to include purpose and description, statewide collaboration, preparation and process, project management, reporting, financial support, capacity and resources, program evaluation, detailed budget, and timelines. The contract award was not to exceed \$100,000. The proposals were required to include a detailed budget and total cost for producing the deliverables.

A committee reviewed the proposals, and the University of Virginia was awarded the contract.

Contract Scope of Work

The contract has three major objectives with specific products of work that must be accomplished by May 2008.

Objective 1: Review, strengthen, and align the standards for school leaders in Virginia

Virginia developed *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers, Administrators, and Superintendents*. Evaluation criteria can have powerful value because they embody the expectations of the public regarding the functions of school personnel, particularly regarding teaching and learning. If those criteria are then used to judge the effectiveness of educators, they help to focus assessment efforts on

self-growth, instructional effectiveness, and improvement of overall performance. The use of clear evaluation criteria for school leaders serves as a foundation for a fair and comprehensive evaluation system that provides sufficient detail and definition so that educators and their supervisors can reasonably understand job expectations.

The Virginia Department of Education is in the process of developing Virginia Teaching Standards (general and content specific) as a companion to the performance evaluation standards. The standards are designed to provide a conceptual model of good teaching. The standards will increase credibility for the teaching profession by holding teachers accountable for their performance in the classroom; in addition they provide support for teacher growth. Likewise, standards for school leaders need to be addressed.

The contractor's work must include the review of the standards set forth in the *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers, Administrators, and Superintendents* for school leaders. The standards and indicators address the areas of "Planning and Assessment," "Instructional Leadership," "Safety and Organizational Management for Learning," "Communication and Community Relations," and "Professionalism." The standards, developed in 1999, must be reviewed and enhanced to ensure they are grounded in research and aligned with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, *Regulations Governing the Licensure of School Personnel*, and *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*.

The contractor's work must focus on competency-based leadership preparation with an emphasis on instructional leadership. The standards for school leaders will link college and university preparation programs, evaluation of school leaders' performance, selection processes, recommendations for Level II administration and supervision endorsements, and professional development.

Objective 2: Identify indicators for standards that address the performance of school leaders -- entry-level school leaders and highly effective school leaders

Indicators for the standards must be grounded in research or based on evidence and address the following levels of school leaders:

1. Entry-Level School Leaders, and
2. Highly Effective School Leaders

A companion document for the standards must be prepared to guide school leaders to examine key aspects of their leadership based on the standards through an inquiry approach to foster ongoing reflection and insights.

Objective 3: Develop a guidance document to facilitate the verification of the Level II administration and supervision endorsement and set forth effective models of induction for beginning school leaders

The *Regulations Governing the Licensure of School Personnel*, effective September 21, 2007, have created a Level I and Level II administrative and supervision endorsement. An endorsement in administration and supervision preK-12 consists of Level I, which is required to serve as a building-level administrator or central office supervisor, and Level II, which is an optional endorsement to which an experienced building-level administrator may aspire. A school leader's assessment prescribed by the Board of Education must be met for all individuals who are seeking an initial endorsement authorizing them to serve as principals and assistant principals in the public schools.

A building-level administrator may seek Level II endorsement in administration and supervision preK-12 after successfully serving as a building-level administrator for at least five years in a public school or accredited nonpublic school and successfully completing a formal induction program as a principal or assistant principal. In order to earn Level II endorsement, the candidate must meet two or more of the following criteria as specified by the Board of Education and documented in a Department of Education approved format and be recommended by the employing Virginia school division superintendent:

1. Evidence of improved student achievement;
2. Evidence of effective instructional leadership;
3. Evidence of positive effect on school climate or culture;
4. Earned doctorate in educational leadership or evidence of formal professional development in the areas of school law, school finance, supervision, human resource management, and instructional leadership;
or
5. Evidence of a completion of a high-quality professional development project designed by the division superintendent.

The purpose of this objective is to develop a guidance document for use by school division superintendents to assess whether a school leader has met the criteria for a Level II endorsement. In addition, the document needs to address the components and development of effective models of induction for beginning principals or assistant principals based on current research.

Products (documents):

The following documents are required to be completed:

1. Revised and aligned standards for school leaders in Virginia;
2. Document with indicators for standards that address the levels of school leaders—entry-level principals and high-performing principals;
3. Guidance document for the verification of the Level II administration and supervision endorsement and describe effective models of induction for beginning school leaders that reflect well aligned state and district leadership standards; leadership training that is closely tied to these standards; and district support systems that demonstrate responsiveness to the job conditions, needs, and learning goals of districts, especially low performing districts

Partnerships:

To engage statewide participation, the work will be required to be completed through a consortium with statewide representation, including, but not limited to, representatives from Virginia college and university approved administration and supervision programs; school leaders from urban, suburban, rural, and low performing schools; representation from professional organizations, and Department of Education officials.

Project Management:

The project will be managed by the lead institution, the University of Virginia. The *Commonwealth Educational Roundtable* will review the products and provide advice and guidance in the process. Documents will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Education and to the Board of Education for review and approval.

CONTINUED WORK OF THE COMMONWEALTH EDUCATIONAL ROUNDTABLE

The *Commonwealth Educational Roundtable* plans to convene three or four times a year. The *Roundtable* will meet in January and March 2008 to focus on the work of the “Advancing Virginia’s Leadership Agenda” initiative. The *Roundtable* will report to the Board of Education regarding its work and recommendations.

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