

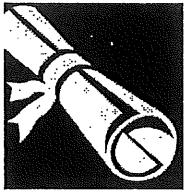
BATH COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

AGENDA ITEM: INFORMATION { X } ACTION { } CLOSED MEETING { }

SUBJECT: SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – PRESENTATIONS/ INFORMATION

Legislation Impacting Education

BACKGROUND: Each year the Virginia General Assembly and Congress considers bills that would impact K-12 education. A brief report on state and federal legislation that may impact schools (and budgets) will be presented.



VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association

Government Relations

2014 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) is a voluntary, self-supporting, and nonpartisan organization whose primary mission is the advancement of education through the unique American tradition of local citizen control of, and accountability for, the Commonwealth's public schools. VSBA promotes the quality of education through services to local school boards. All legislative position statements of VSBA were approved by the Delegate Assembly of the Association at the Annual Convention held on November 21, 2013.

We ask that you **support**:

- The establishment of a balanced assessment and accountability system, as defined by local school boards, that utilizes a more complete picture of student learning by providing both measures of achievement (such as the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests) and state- approved, authentic measures of individualized student growth over time.
- The reduction in the number of SOL tests to carefully selected grade-levels and content-areas to permit the reallocation of assessment dollars and instructional time.
- Local School Division control of SOL testing windows. Local school boards should have the flexibility to provide opportunities for early SOL test administrations; to allow for retaking of tests not passed during the same school year; and to assess students based on mastery of course content and not solely upon reaching a particular number of instructional clock hours.
- An increase in the state Standards of Quality funding. Currently, most Virginia school divisions are operating with state funding that is below Fiscal Year 2007 levels.
- Increased flexibility in local use of SOQ funding. Funding categories are often rigid and not reflective of differences among local needs. Increased flexibility would allow school divisions to move funds from one SOQ requirement category to another based on individual school needs.
- Allowing local school boards to set the school calendar for their division, including opening prior to Labor Day, without having to request a waiver.
- The repeal of the statewide A-F grading system and remove all language creating and requiring such system for individual schools.
- The control of schools to the local school boards and repeal the Opportunity Educational Institution and all language creating and authorizing this Institution.

We ask that you **oppose**:

- Allowing non-public school students to participate in the Virginia High School League (VHSL) activities.
- Vouchers or tuition tax-credits for non-public schools.
- Unfunded local mandates and programs without the state share of funding.



Budget Priorities

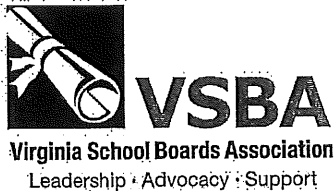
- VSBA **supports** fully funding the Standards of Quality (SOQ) including “non-personal support costs for inflation”.
- VSBA **supports** increased flexibility in local use of SOQ funding. Funding categories are often rigid and not reflective of differences among local needs. Increased flexibility would allow school divisions to move funds from one SOQ requirement category to another based on individual school needs.
- VSBA **opposes** unfunded state and local mandates without the full state share of funding.
- VSBA **supports** item 138 #2 – Removal of Opportunity Education Institution Funding
 - This amendment decreases \$600,059 the first year and \$600,059 in the second year from the general fund and eliminates the seven associated full-time positions for the Opportunity Educational Institution.



SOL Assessment and Accountability Reform

VSBA supports the reform of the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments that would include:

- A balanced assessment and accountability system, as defined by local school boards, that utilizes a more complete picture of student learning by providing both measures of achievement (such as the SOL tests) and state-approved, authentic measures of individualized student growth over time.
- The reduction in the number of SOL tests to carefully selected grade levels and content areas to permit the reallocation of assessment dollars and instructional time.
- Local school division control of SOL testing windows. Local school boards should have the flexibility to provide opportunities for early SOL test administrations; to allow for retaking of tests not passed during the same school year; and to assess students based on mastery of course content and not solely upon reaching a particular number of instructional clock hours.
- The creation of a nonpartisan commission that will review in-depth each SOL subject area to:
 - Recommend changes to the Standards of Learning to the Board of Education;
 - Develop and update a plan for an aligned Standards of Learning assessment system that includes expectations for assessments at the classroom, school division and state levels, and timelines for assessment administration;
 - Work towards creating a multiple-assessment based system; and
 - Develop and update an assessment bank that includes formative and performance-based assessments that are aligned with the Standards of Learning and that are used at the local level by teachers for diagnostic purposes and planning instruction.



Local Control of Virginia's Public Schools

VSBA **opposes** House Bill 63 (Delegate Rob Bell)

This bill forces public schools to join only athletic/interscholastic organizations that allow home school students to participate in public school athletic or interscholastic activities.

- Allowing non-public school students to participate in public interscholastic athletics/activities creates two different and unequal standards for participation – one for public school students and one for non-public school students. Currently, public school students are required to meet at least 13 individual eligibility requirements and home schooled students would only be required to meet 6 of those requirements.
- Allowing non-public school students to participate in VHSL activities may increase risk to the school division and costs for liability insurance.

VSBA **supports** Local Control of the Public School Calendar

House Bills 35, 42, 333, 386 – Delegates Kory, Habeeb, Greason and Comstock
Senate Bills 131 and 637 – Senators Newman and Smith

These bills give local schools boards the ability to open before Labor Day without seeking state approval.

- Bring equity to all school divisions - over 60% of school divisions have waivers for pre-Labor Day openings, but the remaining schools divisions are denied that flexibility.
- Local school boards are in the best position to set their own calendars and to determine a start date that is best for the students and community.
- Early opening maximizes instructional days before nationally-normed tests such as Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB), as well as Virginia's SOL tests.
- State approval for local school calendar waivers is an unnecessary state requirement.



VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

Delay Implementation of A-F School Grading

- VSBA believes that a single letter grade does not accurately reflect or effectively communicate the success of a school.
- Currently, there is a widely accepted rating system under the Standards of Accreditation which has been in place for years.
- VSBA supports a delay in implementation of A-F School Grading so that sufficient data can be gathered and valid growth measures can be developed as necessary OR repeal if such measures and data cannot reliably be gathered.

VSBA supports Senate Bill 324 (Senator John Miller)

- This legislation delays the date by which the Board of Education is required to implement the A to F individual school performance grading system from October 1, 2014 to October 1, 2017.
- The bill requires the Board of Education to provide a clear series of A to F grades for schools and to take into account certain factors in assigning grades including all state mandated assessments; any assessment developed or approved for use by the relevant local school board; student mobility; the experience and qualifications of staff; total cost and funding per pupil; extracurricular activities and the number of participants in such activities; and parental engagement and satisfaction levels.
- The bill also requires the Board of Education to make the system and grades available to the public in a format which allows for a comparison of similarly situated schools in terms of percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, percentage of English language learners, local funding beyond what is required by the composite index, student mobility, and any other category the Board of Education deems appropriate.