

**REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE AND TRADE
BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Status of
Education Reform in Virginia**

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



SENATE DOCUMENT NO. 28

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1994**



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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December 15, 1992

TO: The Honorable L. Douglas Wilder, Governor of Virginia
and Members of the General Assembly

House Joint Resolution 599 and Senate Joint Resolution 331 requested that the Secretaries of Education and Commerce and Trade develop jointly with the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Board of Education a plan for the phased implementation of the new public education system relative to the recommendations of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000 and to submit their plan to the Governor and the General Assembly. On behalf of the Board and Department of Education, we have the honor of submitting herewith the report on the "Status of Education Reform in Virginia" in response to House Joint Resolution 599 and Senate Joint Resolution 331.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Karen J. Petersen in cursive.

Karen J. Petersen
Secretary of Education

Handwritten signature of Cathleen A. Magennis in cursive.

Cathleen A. Magennis
Secretary of Commerce and Trade

KJP/CAM/pfc
Enclosure

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BACKGROUND

The 1993 General Assembly passed House Joint Resolution No. 599 and Senate Joint Resolution 331 which requested the Secretaries of Education and Economic Development to implement World Class Education, relative to the recommendations of Workforce Virginia 2000. "World Class Education" is the name given to the State Board of Education's efforts at systemic education reform in Virginia's public schools, kindergarten through grade 12. "Workforce Virginia 2000" refers to the work of the Advisory Committee established by Governor L. Douglas Wilder which produced a report on preparing Virginia's students to compete in the workforce of the 21st century. The report, entitled The Virginia Plan for Strengthening the Commonwealth's 21st Century Workforce, contained nine broad recommendations and is generally referred to as the Workforce 2000 Report.

The genesis of current education reform efforts in the Commonwealth rest with the work and recommendations of the report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education published in 1986. This Commission found that "there are two main obstacles standing in the way of our having an excellent educational system. The first is the wide disparity among Virginia's school divisions in the quality and scope of educational programs, and the other being illiteracy." A number of the key recommendations of this Commission were adopted and implemented by the State Board*of Education and funded by the General Assembly. Most notable were programs for literacy testing at the sixth grade, and smaller class sizes for first grade and secondary English.

Recognizing that the Commonwealth's students would need more than basic literacy skills to allow them to compete in the workforce of the 21st century, Governor Wilder appointed the Governor's Commission on Educational Opportunity for All Virginians as well as the Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000. Both groups were charged with making recommendations to create a world class educational system for Virginia so that students would master both the basic and higher level skills needed to enter the workforce and allow Virginia to remain economically vital. Appendices A and B provide detailed information on the implementation of recommendations contained in the two respective reports.

Members of the State Board of Education served on both the Commission and the Advisory Committee, and the Board of Education embarked on an ambitious program to implement many of the key recommendations made by both groups. On May 27, 1993, the State Board of Education adopted a vision statement, "Virginia's Vision for a World Class Education" (see Appendix C). This document guides future Board action to implement the recommendations of the Workforce Virginia 2000 report and the Commission on Educational Opportunity through a focus on World Class Education and the needs of the business community.

CURRENT STATUS OF REFORM EFFORT

Five of the six goals of the Board's World Class Education initiative have been widely supported. The first goal is to redefine what all students should know and be able to do when they graduate, establishing high expectations for all students. The second addresses the need to hold students accountable for achievement of these high expectations through improved assessments. These first two goals closely link with the two recommendations of the Workforce Virginia 2000 Commission relative to public education, kindergarten through grade 10.

The third goal speaks to strengthened accountability of schools and divisions for student performance. The fourth relates to the critical involvement of parents in the education of their children, and the fifth focuses on meeting the individual needs of each student in order that all achieve at high levels. The sixth goal deals with promoting equity in educational opportunity and addressing disparity.

To define the high expectations all students would be expected to achieve, the Board focused on the identification of critical student outcomes. Initial attempts to frame those outcomes were contained in drafts of the Common Core of Learning (CCL). Versions of the CCL framework became the subject of considerable controversy and criticism. Some critics did not agree with the concept of setting performance standards; others disagreed with specific outcomes as proposed or did not see sufficient emphasis on academic disciplines; still others did not see the need for change at all.

On September 15, 1993, Governor Wilder directed the Department of Education to withdraw the Common Core of Learning initiative for Virginia's schools. Subsequently, the Board of Education approved a resolution withdrawing the CCL and reaffirming its commitment to improve the educational performance of Virginia's children. All work related to the CCL, including content and performance standards, has been terminated, as have all related assessment activities.

The Vision Statement continues to be the foundation of the Commonwealth's education reform effort for over 1,800 elementary, middle and secondary public schools. The challenge remains to develop consensus among parents, educators, business and other community members on what should constitute education standards for Virginia's students.

In reviewing the activities of the past two years, some valuable lessons may be learned from the experience of fifteen Early Childhood demonstration schools and three Pre- and Early Adolescent demonstration schools that have used a blend of state, local and federal funds to plan and implement local education reform. Each of these sites has developed a plan which is educationally sound and strongly supported by parents, teachers and administrators. State funding of these sites is budgeted through June 30, 1994.

Similarly, smaller grants aimed at school improvement through staff development and training have been awarded to 95 schools in 72 divisions. These grants fund the activities of partnerships among regional staff of the Department of Education, teams of teachers and administrators from the school, and community representatives. The partnerships seek to focus school planning on improving student academic achievement, assessing staff development needs at the school level, arranging skills training for teachers in areas of need and promise, and brokering long term staff development around the state among schools which are working on similar school improvement strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the needs identified by key commissions and the problems of recent attempts to define a reform agenda, it appears that future policy debate on education reform in Virginia must include consideration of the following issues:

- Curriculum reform, based on higher academic standards and intended to improve the overall quality of schooling for all children;
- A well-designed systemic reform strategy which would ensure the extension of higher standards and improved instructional practices to all schools and all segments of the student population, and provide a system of support, including staff development, to enable all schools to realize improvements;
- Policy amendments to promote and sustain equality of educational opportunity throughout the state; and
- Further development of an accountability system which permits local flexibility but assures that all students are receiving a high quality education that will prepare them for their adult lives in the 21st century.

SUMMARY

Significant challenges remain for public education in the Commonwealth if it is to meet the standards set out in the Constitution of Virginia and the expectations of its citizens. Initial efforts towards systemic school reform must be reconsidered but the compelling need for educational reform remains. The challenge in the future will be to seek new strategies which can invigorate parents, business leaders, educators and politicians to unite in pursuit of systemic reform.

APPENDIX A

**GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL VIRGINIANS**

Status of Commission Recommendations

**Prepared by
Department of Education**

October 1993

BACKGROUND

The 1990 Governor's Commission on Educational Opportunity for All Virginians examined issues that impact students' educational opportunities in three broad areas:

- ❑ **Pupil Equity** -- Issues that include the impact student characteristics have on achievement, and methods and programs outside the basic curriculum which prepare students to learn.
- ❑ **Program Equity** -- Issues that include differences among program offerings available to students, and differences between the foundation program required by the Standards of Quality and actual programs offered to students.
- ❑ **Fiscal Equity** -- Issues that include determining the cost of the foundation program, sharing that cost between the Commonwealth and local school divisions, and addressing differences among the levels of resources devoted to each child's education.

The 24-member Commission was organized into three working committees, each examining the specific issues associated with one of these areas. The Commission held numerous meetings and four public hearings across the Commonwealth.

FINDINGS OF DISPARITY

The Commission's Pupil Equity Committee found that wide disparities exist in student circumstance and achievement across the Commonwealth. To address these findings, the Commission made eight recommendations to enhance pupil equity.

The Commission's Program Equity Committee found that disparity in program opportunity exists at two levels -- among local school divisions and between standards and practice. The Commission made ten recommendations to enhance program equity.

The Commission's Fiscal Equity Committee found that there is disparity in funding for education at two levels -- among local school divisions, and between state funding of standards and divisional spending to meet and exceed them. The Commission made nine recommendations to enhance fiscal equity.

The Commission made a total of 27 recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly to address educational disparity.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION STATUS

Of the 27 recommendations made by the Commission, to date:

- Four (4) have been completely implemented or accomplished;
- Nineteen (19) are in the process of being implemented;
- Two (2) required no action;
- One (1) has not been acted upon; and,
- One (1) has undergone extensive examination by the General Assembly's Commission on Equity in Public Education.

A complete list of the Commission's recommendations and the status of each is attached.

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

STATUS

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Board of Education should redefine the Standards of Quality and Standards of Accreditation over the next five years to include:

- statewide goals for what all students should learn, student performance standards, and measurable outcomes to be assessed;
- a common core curriculum to achieve these goals; and
- criterion referenced tests and other performance-based assessments.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Board of Education and the General Assembly should upgrade current standards on offerings and staffing levels to address the gap between state standards and prevailing practice in divisions, overcome differences in local aspirations, and address disparity among the divisions.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The Department of Education and the Board of Education, working with the General Assembly, should refocus and restructure the elementary level of education, including revising the Standards of Quality and Standards of Accreditation to:

- emphasize successful first-time learning;
- reduce the need for costly remediation;
- ensure developmental appropriateness; and
- provide special emphasis on K-3 students, including smaller class size and lower pupil/teacher ratios.

IN PROGRESS:

- Standards of Quality and Standards of Accreditation revised in 1992; further revisions are being considered for 1994-95.
- The Board of Education has adopted a vision statement that calls for the development of new expectations and assessments.

IN PROGRESS:

The following projects reported findings and recommendations to the Board of Education in June 1993:

- Study of K-3 Staffing.
- Study of Special Education Class Size Standards.

IN PROGRESS:

- Standards of Quality have been revised to emphasize developmentally appropriate practice in grades K-3 and to allow remedial education funds to be used for prevention and intervention activities.
- Early Childhood and Pre- & Early Adolescent model sites were funded for the 1992-94 biennium.
- K-3 Staffing Study will report findings and recommendations to the Board in June 1993.
- Department study of Reading Recovery Program as requested by the 1993 General Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Board of Education and the General Assembly, in consultation with the Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs, should provide in the Standards of Quality for preschool developmental programs for at-risk four-year-olds in all divisions by 1995.

The Board of Education should develop standards to ensure the developmental appropriateness of these programs, and should examine the benefits to be derived from providing these same programs to at-risk three-year-olds.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Department of Education, with the General Assembly and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, should provide for appropriate expansion of distance learning, tuition-free dual enrollment, and cooperative and regional programs for greater access to certain courses by students. Partnerships should be developed between public schools and institutions of higher education to establish the concept of learning as a continuum.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The Department of Education should improve its information systems and analytical capability to conduct quality research and evaluation of programs.

The Department of Education should establish a program which selects a school or division in need of improvement and provides funding for a specified period of time necessary to experiment with innovative practices for the purpose of testing and identifying effective models.

STATUS

IN PROGRESS:

- The Board of Education, the Department of Education, and the Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs is conducting a study of programs currently provided for at-risk four-year-olds in Virginia. The study is expected to make recommendations for the provision of quality preschool programs for all at-risk four-year-olds.

ACCOMPLISHED:

- The Virginia Satellite Educational Network (VSEN) has been expanded to include additional sites and course offerings. Distance learning programs, including VSEN, will receive approximately \$5 million in state funding during the 1992-94 biennium.
- A 1992 DOE and SCHEV study of dual enrollment found 237 participating institutions serving over 11,000 dual enrollment students.
- The 1993 General Assembly funded the establishment of the Southside Governor's School, which utilizes distance learning and community colleges to provide an enriched program for gifted students in this sparsely populated area of the state.
- Department of Education regional representatives currently promote regional cooperation among local school divisions and institutions of higher education.

ACCOMPLISHED/IN PROGRESS:

- The Department of Education was restructured in 1990 to include Information Systems, Policy & Planning, and Research & Evaluation units. These functions now play an integral part in all Department activities.
- Eighteen Early Childhood and Pre- & Early Adolescent model sites were funded during the 1992-94 biennium to demonstrate various effective educational models.

RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Board of Education and the Department of Education should provide technical assistance and services to reduce the number and percentage of students retained in grade and dropping out, to increase the percentage of minority and economically disadvantaged students enrolled in college preparation and advanced placement programs, and to reduce the range of differences in student achievement.

RECOMMENDATION 8: The Board of Education should develop assessment measures at both the individual school and division level which are tied to the revised Standards of Quality and Standards of Accreditation. These assessments should set high expectations for all students, hold individual schools and divisions accountable for student outcomes, and identify areas in need of targeted assistance for improvement.

RECOMMENDATION 9: The Secretaries of Education and Health and Human Resources, and their respective agencies, should jointly address the need to coordinate community support to schools and students on the following issues:

- nutrition;
- comprehensive health care;
- family financial assistance;
- child abuse prevention; and
- identification and education of homeless children.

STATUS

ACCOMPLISHED/IN PROGRESS:

- The Board of Education has proposed criteria for the identification of at-risk students.
- Financial and technical assistance for dropout prevention is currently provided through Project YES, which will receive \$20.9 million during the 1992-94 biennium.
- College opportunities for minority and disadvantaged students are provided through Project Discovery (\$1.9 million in 1992-94) and the Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (\$750,000 in 1993-94).

IN PROGRESS:

- The Board of Education's vision statement calls for new assessments that measure student mastery of a common set of expectations.
- The Outcome Accountability Project (OAP) will serve as a tool for identifying schools and divisions in need of assistance. Beginning in May 1992, individual schools were provided with data on 48 performance and outcome indicators.

IN PROGRESS:

- School nutrition programs have been expanded to include breakfast in high-poverty schools.
- School/Community Health Center Pilots received funding in the 1992-94 biennium (\$1.8 million) to provide a variety of health care services to students. The 6 pilot sites are currently concentrating their efforts on prevention and intervention activities in elementary schools.
- Full-time Homeless Education Coordinator in the Department of Education.
- Board of Education has assumed a leadership role on the Joint Board Liaison Committee, and both the Board and the Department actively participate in the Council for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy.

RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 10: The Department of Education should assess the need for a School Breakfast Program in those schools that do not currently offer one. Where need is found, the Department, in cooperation with the school and school division, should develop and implement a plan for offering the program.

Schools that currently offer the School Breakfast Program should take steps to promote it, and the Department of Education should continue to facilitate this process by providing schools with the necessary strategies and materials.

RECOMMENDATION 11: The Board of Education should develop standards which reflect sound educational practice or theory for funding programs for students for whom English is a second language, and for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who are educationally at risk. Additionally, the Board of Education should revise the Standards of Quality to include standards which reflect sound educational practice or theory for funding vocational, remedial, gifted programs, and related services for handicapped children.

The Board of Education should require school divisions to identify annually students at risk of failing to meet criteria developed by the Board and Department of Education so that these students can receive additional services such as tutoring; counselling, extended day programs; and social and health services.

RECOMMENDATION 12: The Board of Education, with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the General Assembly, should strengthen existing incentives for college and university students, recent college and university graduates, and experienced teachers to teach in specific geographic locations or subject areas, through increased levels of financial assistance contingent upon commitment to work in designated areas. In addition to maintaining an emphasis on competitive salaries, the General Assembly should consider expanded support to:

- the teacher scholarship loan program in Virginia colleges and universities;
- other student loan forgiveness options; and
- time-restricted salary bonuses to meet specific needs.

STATUS

ACCOMPLISHED:

- The 1993 General Assembly has mandated the provision of School Breakfast Programs in high-poverty schools. The Board of Education is now promulgating regulations for program implementation.

IN PROGRESS:

- The Department of Education is completing a study of Special Education Class Size Standards.
- The 1993 Appropriation Act provided an additional \$2.1 million in 1993-94 to lower class sizes for the educable mentally retarded.
- The General Assembly provided school divisions with funds for students for whom English is a second language (\$3.8 million in 1992-94).
- The General Assembly provided an additional \$46.9 million in the 1992-94 biennium for programs and services for educationally at-risk students.

IN PROGRESS:

- The 1993 Appropriation Act does provide \$50,000 to:
“ . . . be used to attract teachers to those rural regions of the state which demonstrate a lack of ability to hire and retain qualified teachers.”
- Initiatives of both the 1992 and 1993 General Assemblies include funding of regional services for the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium and the Blue Ridge Regional Education and Training Council.

RECOMMENDATION

STATUS

RECOMMENDATION 13: The Department of Education should develop a "Virginia's Finest" Corps comprised of experienced teachers and administrators to provide instructional, technical, and management assistance to schools in need.

RECOMMENDATION 14: The Board of Education should revise the Standards of Quality and Standards of Accreditation to include a stronger statement in support of funding and quality of staff development for teachers and administrators.

RECOMMENDATION 15: The Department of Education, working with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, should:

- implement a statewide staff development foundation program for teachers;
- develop a regional approach to identifying staff development needs in the divisions; and
- establish linkages with institutions of higher education and other resources.

Further, the Department of Education should establish a formal network of teacher resource centers that are accessible to all teachers.

RECOMMENDATION 16: The Board of Education and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia should identify and implement the most feasible way to provide graduate-level training opportunities by Virginia institutions of higher education to teachers and administrators in geographically isolated areas.

IN PROGRESS:

- Although the Board has not created a "Virginia's Finest" Corps, the Department of Education currently provides teams to schools requesting assistance on instructional programs, facilities management, transportation and other areas.

IN PROGRESS:

- The Board of Education has adopted a vision statement that cites staff development as one of eleven key strategies for improving educational effectiveness.
- A total of \$860,000 was appropriated for 1993-94 for the development of staff training programs.

IN PROGRESS:

- The Virginia Center for Staff Development will provide teachers statewide with staff development opportunities.
- The Department of Education's University Research Consortium establishes links to higher education.
- Department of Education regional representatives are located within colleges and universities, and serve as a link between higher education and local school divisions.

IN PROGRESS

- Initiatives of both the 1992 and 1993 General Assemblies include funding of regional services for the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium and the Blue Ridge Regional Education and Training Council.
- Some graduate-level training opportunities are currently provided by Clinch Valley College (University of Virginia).

RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 17: The Secretaries of Education and Economic Development should continue to lead a joint statewide effort to establish partnerships with business, industry, governments and cultural entities to promote preschool-12 education.

The General Assembly should consider additional incentives for businesses which contribute equipment and materials or provide apprenticeships to schools and divisions with measured wealth below 0.4.

The Department of Education should provide school divisions with models of proven programs to implement a comprehensive and integrated site-based plan for the involvement of community service organizations, parent and businesses in all levels of the school program.

RECOMMENDATION 18: The Board of Education should create a program of incentives for promoting the involvement of parents in schools where such involvement is currently lacking, and should gather information on successful parental involvement programs and disseminate models of successful programs to the Commonwealth's public schools.

RECOMMENDATION 19: The practice of school division "borrowing" add-on positions to calculate the legislatively mandated ratio of 51 per 1,000 basic positions should be evaluated by the Department of Education, in consultation with the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

RECOMMENDATION 20: Maintain the use of the division as a unit of cost and the linear weighted average as a reasonable method for calculating prevailing costs.

STATUS

IN PROGRESS:

- A Department of Education representative will serve on the newly-created Advisory Committee to the Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program.
- A Board of Education member will serve on the Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council.
- The Department of Education and the Virginia Community College System will examine the development and establishment of school-to-work transition programs.

IN PROGRESS:

- Department of Education is currently conducting the Parental Involvement Project in collaboration with the Virginia PTA.

NO ACTION TAKEN

NO ACTION REQUIRED

RECOMMENDATION

STATUS

RECOMMENDATION 21: The Governor and the General Assembly should expand the Commonwealth's participation in the financing of capital costs of public schools, and that the concept of ability to pay be incorporated in any expansion of state assistance for school construction and debt service. Further, a mechanism should be established to assess the criticality of needs be used in allocating state aid for capital costs.

RECOMMENDATION 22: The Board of Education should review and assess the need to revise the Standards of Quality to include more specific guidelines related to the provision of instructional materials and equipment necessary for children to obtain a quality education.

The Department of Education should work with school divisions to establish partnerships for the purposes of sharing buying power for equipment, innovative approaches, and resources.

RECOMMENDATION 23: The Board of Education and the General Assembly should revise the Standards of Quality to ensure all Virginia students are provided with free textbooks. The Department of Education should evaluate its method of determining prevailing costs to ensure the amount for textbooks reasonably reflects the cost to school divisions.

RECOMMENDATION 24: Current incentives within the Literary Fund for consolidating small schools should be expanded where appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 25: The use of a statewide pay scale for teachers should not be implemented as a method to reduce fiscal disparity. Furthermore, the state's funding formula should continue to provide a differential to recognize the cost of competing for those school divisions currently identified as needing such assistance.

IN PROGRESS:

- The General Assembly implemented this in part by providing school divisions with \$17.6 million in the 1992-94 biennium as a basic aid supplement for school building maintenance.

IN PROGRESS:

- Department of Education regional representatives promote the use of common contracts and shared maintenance facilities among local school divisions.
- Some local school divisions have formed formal partnerships for efficiency and resource-sharing purposes.

ACCOMPLISHED:

- The 1993 General Assembly enacted legislation providing students with free textbooks beginning in the 1994-96 biennium.
- The Board of Education is promulgating regulations governing the free textbook system.

ACCOMPLISHED:

- The 1993 General Assembly provided an additional funding incentive for any school division consolidating two or more small schools.

NO ACTION REQUIRED

RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION 26: The Department of Education and other appropriate state agencies should monitor local school divisions for fiscal responsibility and efficiency in the use of public education funds.

RECOMMENDATION 27: The Governor and the General Assembly should consider the following package of changes to local funding for education; none of these changes should be instituted in isolation, and this package of changes should be phased-in over the next two biennia.

- A. Revise and fund the Standards of Quality to acknowledge prevailing practice and the additional costs of students with special needs such as those with limited English proficiency, those who may be educationally disadvantaged due to family circumstances related to poverty, those identified as handicapped, gifted or in need of remedial assistance.
- B. Ensure minimum local effort on behalf of public schools without placing any maximum limit, or cap, on local effort.
- C. Further equalize revenue from the one cent sales tax for education among school divisions on ability to pay and distribute on average daily membership.
- D. Increase the artificial cap on the measure of local ability to pay to 0.85 or 0.9.
- E. Provide an alternative measure of ability to pay for distributing state aid which meets these criteria:
 - more accurate representation of local fiscal capacity than the current composite index;
 - jurisdictional tax equity or equal local effort on behalf of education; and
 - taxpayer equity or some better recognition of taxpayer ability to pay.

STATUS

IN PROGRESS:

- The Department of Education has presented a review of local fiscal effort in support of public education to both the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees.
- Since 1990, the Department of Education has conducted 30 program and facility studies for local school divisions, and has made recommendations which would result in more efficient use of division facilities and resources.

ON HOLD:

- This package of recommended changes is currently undergoing further examination by the General Assembly's Commission on Equity in Public Education.

Recommendation 27.A is being implemented, in part, through the following efforts:

- Department of Education study of K-3 Staffing Ratios, which will report findings and recommendations to the Board of Education in June 1993.
- Provision of additional funding for students for whom English is a second language (\$3.8 million in the 1992-94 biennium).
- Provision of additional funding for educationally at-risk students (\$46.9 million in the 1992-94 biennium).

APPENDIX B

**Governor's Advisory Committee
WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000:
A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE**

Status of Committee Recommendations

**Prepared by
Department of Education**

November 1993

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: World Class Education and Student Assessments

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish an educational performance standard of excellence which all students are expected to achieve by the tenth grade. This standard should be benchmarked to the highest in the world and be measured through a series of statewide performance evaluations called the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Successful completion of these evaluations will certify that, among other competencies, each Virginia high school student possesses the basic academic, personal management, and teamwork skills expected by employers and needed in an emerging global economy."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: In Progress

- The Board of Education has adopted a Vision Statement that has among its goals the establishment of a World Class System of Education in which all children are able to demonstrate knowledge and skills comparable to the best in the world, and are prepared, upon graduation, to enter and successfully continue in the skilled workforce and to pursue further academic and technical education.
- Twenty-five Virginia high schools are currently participating in the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) High Schools that Work program, the nation's first large-scale effort to integrate academic and vocational studies. Participating schools have made a commitment to create more rigorous academic and vocational curricula, require all students to pursue an upgraded academic core, integrate academic and vocational learning, and provide students with additional support to meet higher standards.
- The Department of Education study, Preparing a Skilled Workforce for the 21st Century, conducted at the request of the 1992 General Assembly, identified eight critical competencies that students need to be able to enter and successfully compete in the workplace.
- The Commonwealth has been awarded a five-year \$9.6 million grant from the National Science Foundation to reform Virginia's mathematics and science education from kindergarten through college (K-14). This initiative -- Virginia Quality Instruction in the Sciences and Technology (VQUEST) -- is designed to model the implementation of World Class Education in science and mathematics, and includes the provision of school-based master teachers, a staff development component, instructional materials reform, and new assessments.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 2: Preparation for Further Education or Work

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should assure that virtually all students achieve the competencies required to satisfactorily complete the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Further, preschool through high school education should refocus upon preparing all Virginia public school graduates to continue their education at college or in technical or apprenticeship programs and to enter the workforce prepared for the demands of a world economy."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: In Progress

- Currently, 131 school divisions and 23 community colleges are engaged in Tech Prep programs. These programs stimulate the development of business-education partnerships, provide for the integration of academic and vocational competencies, and ensure participating students a smooth transition from high school into post-secondary education and, ultimately, into the workplace.
- At the request of the 1992 General Assembly, the Board of Education and the State Council for Higher Education conducted a study of preparing a skilled workforce for the 21st century. The study made recommendations to provide students with critical workplace competencies through coordinating statewide workforce preparation efforts, providing career counseling services, and creating partnerships with employers.
- Two Virginia school divisions, Richmond City and Charles City County, currently participate in Career Pathways, a pilot project that incorporates career exploration, work experiences, and the integration of work-based learning into the classroom. These pilots are a joint project of school systems, the James River Corporation, the Virginia Employment Commission, and the Departments of Education and Labor and Industry.
- At the request of the 1993 General Assembly, the Department of Education, in conjunction with the Virginia Community College System and the Departments of Labor and Industry and Rehabilitative Services, is studying school-to-work transition programs in the Commonwealth. A report will be submitted to the Governor and the 1994 General Assembly, and is expected to provide recommendations on implementing a statewide school-to-work transition system.
- The Commonwealth is currently pursuing a federal School-to-Work Transition development grant that would provide the framework for a unified state school-to-work transition plan. The state system would provide for local flexibility while integrating both work-based/school-based learning and occupational/academic learning, and linking secondary and post-secondary education.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION 3: Youth Work Learning Centers and the
Prevention/Retention of Dropouts**

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish local Youth-Learning Centers responsible for all young people who have left school before establishing their competencies under the Virginia Assessment of Critical Knowledge and Skills. Under the age of 18, youths who have not satisfactorily completed the Virginia Assessment and who are not enrolled in school should be required to build these competencies through Youth Work-Learning Center programs as a stipulation of initial or continued employment."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: In Progress

- Financial and technical assistance for dropout prevention is currently provided through Project YES (Youth Experiencing Success), which will receive \$20.9 million in state funding during the 1992-94 biennium.
- The Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP) is designed to reduce student dropout rates, increase graduation rates, and increase the number of students pursuing post-secondary education and training, and is currently supported with \$750,000 in state funding.
- The 1993 General Assembly provided \$1.2 million to implement four regional alternative education pilot sites designed to serve students who have been either suspended or expelled. Seventeen (17) school divisions currently participate in these regional pilots.
- Cities in Schools programs, funded through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), currently deliver educational and social services in seven Virginia schools with high dropout rates. Documented results include increased student achievement, improved school attendance, and improved behavior.
- The Summer Youth Employment program, funded through the JTPA, provides approximately 8,000 disadvantaged youth with work experience, academic enrichment, and basic skills training designed to encourage and assist them to stay in or return to school.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 4: Comprehensive System of Apprenticeship, Certification, and Associate Degrees

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should create a more comprehensive system of apprenticeship, technical and professional certification, and associate degrees for the majority of Virginia students and adult workers who do not pursue a baccalaureate degree."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: In Progress

- In 1990, the Virginia Apprenticeship Council assumed responsibility for developing policies related to apprenticeship-related instruction.
- The High School Apprenticeship Program was implemented by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry in 1990 and serves approximately 100 secondary students. These students are employed and registered as apprentices, receive on-the-job training and related instructional courses, and are working toward an adult apprentice certificate. A similar program for community college students was created in 1992.
- The Virginia Community College System, in cooperation with the Departments of Education and Labor & Industry, has implemented the federal Tech Prep program to provide a seamless curriculum between high schools and community colleges. Currently, 131 school divisions and 23 community colleges are engaged in Tech Prep programs, two of which have received national recognition.
- The Commonwealth is currently pursuing a federal School-to-Work Transition development grant that would provide the framework for a unified state school-to-work transition plan. The proposed state system would provide for local experimentation and flexibility while incorporating the following components of the federal program:
 - the integration of work-based and school-based learning;
 - the integration of occupational and academic learning; and;
 - the linkage of secondary and post-secondary education.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 5: Business-Education Partnerships

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should create a system for the development and support of partnerships between business and education."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: Accomplished

- The Virginia Business-Education Partnership Program was established by Governor L. Douglas Wilder and the 1993 General Assembly to promote partnerships between education and the private sector. This program provides leadership and advocacy for business-education partnerships in Virginia and serves as a catalyst and broker for the formation of dynamic, continuing partnerships among education, business and community groups.

- The Governor's Business-Education Conference "Working for Results" provided over 25 workshops related to creating and sustaining successful business-education partnerships, and included the presentation of the first Governor's Awards for Excellence. Twelve outstanding business-education partnerships were selected from over 100 such projects statewide to receive the Governor's Partnership in Education Awards.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 6: Comprehensive Training Policy

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should adopt a more comprehensive policy on training and employment."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: In Progress

- ❑ The establishment of the Workforce Leadership Council, consisting of state agency heads and representatives from the Governor's cabinet, and the creation of its companion Workforce Management Team now enable the Commonwealth to begin the process of developing and, ultimately, adopting a comprehensive policy on training and employment.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 7: Single Training and Employment Authority

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should establish a single authority with the power to give direction to training and employment activities across various agencies pursuant to the Commonwealth's training and employment policy."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: Accomplished

- The Workforce Leadership Council, consisting of state agency heads and representatives from the Governor's cabinet, was established in 1992. The Council brings together all elements of state government that have a role and stake in education, employment, and training.

- The Workforce Leadership Council is currently determining how each of their respective agencies can coordinate efforts in the following nine areas:
 1. Welfare reform,
 2. Economic development and workforce training,
 3. Inmate education and training,
 4. Business productivity,
 5. Literacy Passport and World Class Education,
 6. Education and training as a continuum,
 7. Streamlining state and federal education,
 8. Employment and training programs, and,
 9. Aging populations.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 8: Continuous Worker Training Programs

"The Commonwealth of Virginia should create incentives which encourage employers to develop continuous training programs for their current workers at all levels to assure their continuing development toward world-class standards and to allow the workplace to take full advantage of employees' potential."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: In Progress

- The Virginia Productivity Institute at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University has developed strategies to implement the Virginia Quality Confederation, a public-private partnership to assist business in promoting more productive, cost-effective business practices, including the training of existing workers.

- Strategies have been developed to establish a network of 25 training and resource centers in communities across the state. These centers would utilize the resources of the Virginia Community College System and would provide training for small and medium-sized companies in the principles of continuous quality improvement and high-performance work organizations.

WORKFORCE VIRGINIA 2000: A PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE
STATUS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 9: Advocacy

"The Governor of Virginia should appoint an Advisory Council on Workforce Virginia 2000 to advocate these recommendations and to report to him on its progress."

STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION: Accomplished

- The 1993 General Assembly permanently established the 21-member Workforce 2000 Advocacy Council which includes representation from Virginia's General Assembly and Board of Education, as well as the state's businesses, industries, education community and workforce. The Council will promote the recommendations of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000 and provide quarterly reports to the Secretaries of Education and Economic Development.

APPENDIX C

VIRGINIA'S VISION FOR A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION

**Adopted by the
State Board of Education**

May 27, 1993

Virginia's Vision for a World Class Education

Statement of the Board of Education

Adopted May 27, 1993

The Virginia Board of Education is committed to providing a World Class Education for all children who attend the public schools. Creating such an education system requires fundamental and systemic changes in Virginia's schools. To guide and to motivate such changes, a broad vision -- shared by teachers, students, parents, educators, the public, and our political leadership -- is essential.

THE VISION

The Vision of the Board of Education is to create a World Class system of education in which virtually all children:

- Learn and are able to demonstrate competence in a common core of knowledge and skills comparable to the best in the world.
- Are prepared, upon graduation, to enter and successfully continue in the skilled work force and to pursue further academic and technical education.
- Develop a sense of ethics and values reflecting individual and shared responsibilities for themselves and to the community in an increasingly global society.

THE PROBLEM

America led the world in developing a system of free universal education; and Virginia led the nation. Thomas Jefferson and his colleagues understood that education for all citizens was essential both to the success of their democratic experiment and to the improvement of economic opportunity.

For nearly two centuries the American economy, based upon universal educational access, abundant natural resources and expanding individual opportunity, has provided our citizens the highest standards of living the world has known.

In recent years, however, there is growing concern that our economy is faltering, our multicultural society splintering. In both large cities and rural counties there are too many Americans living in poverty and despair. We no longer assume that the next generation will enjoy higher standards of living.

Meanwhile, other nations have surpassed us economically. Many other countries now have higher average wages, greater productivity growth, and rising, rather than diminishing, standards of living.

The post World War II revolutions in communications, technology, and transportation have inexorably created a global economy in which capital, technology and production equipment move freely to the country and locality that offer the most efficient means of production. To a large extent, both American and foreign companies base their locational decisions upon the relationship between skills and wages.

If Virginia's economy is to provide its citizens the opportunity to earn high wages, Virginia must provide its children with world class skills. Otherwise, highly paid jobs will move to other states and nations with better educated work forces. Virginians will be left to compete for unskilled, low-wage jobs.

By the standards of the nation, Virginia's schools have performed well. Our educational outcomes, as measured on standardized tests, are in the top third of the nation.

The problem is that virtually no American school system has taken into account the new global economy and the success of other nations in preparing their children to compete for high wages.

Although the world economy has changed dramatically since World War II, the ways we organize our schools and shape the curriculum have hardly changed at all. America's education system, which once led the world, too often graduates students who are not equipped to use computers and other technology, to discover or solve complex problems, to express ideas clearly, or to work cooperatively with others. Worse still, far too many of our young people see little or no relationship between their education, or even a high school diploma, and life beyond high school. So they slide by, doing the minimum, or drop out before they graduate.

Our system of schooling, like the workers it was developed to train, is based on the outmoded factory model. Schools are organized like production lines. Children are too often treated like standard components to whom schools "apply" the "Three R's" and other basic information. The process emphasizes rote memorization, not the identification of problems, issues or values and their attempted solution or evaluation. "Defects" or "rejects" show up in our drop-out statistics.

Worst of all, our schools sort and select students based on perceived ability and thereby create a self-fulfilling prophesy of low achievement levels through low expectations for those who are considered "not college material." Even for those who are selected for maximum performance, our educational results compare unfavorably with many other countries.

CORE CONCEPTS

Endless "quick fixes" or single issue reforms have been tried and have failed. Creating a World Class Education system requires a long-term commitment to a broad range of interlocking goals that support our shared vision. In order to bring the vision to fruition, six core concepts are essential.

- **Focus on Student Outcomes - The Common Core of Learning**

At the heart of the World Class Education System is the Common Core of Learning. It defines what all students should know and be able to do when they graduate. It shifts the emphasis from what teachers teach (curriculum) to what students learn (achievement). It stresses higher order thinking and problem solving, written and oral communications, and other basic knowledge and skills necessary for individuals to succeed in life and for our Commonwealth to compete effectively for high-skilled, high-paid jobs. While not a prescribed curriculum, the Common Core is the foundation upon which curricula, textbooks, and other curriculum materials and teaching strategy are based. It is the "glue" that keeps all aspects of the teaching and learning process focused on World Class results.

- **Focus on High Expectations for all Students - The Virginia Assessment System**

The Common Core of Learning will reflect world standards which children are expected to master by age sixteen (10th grade). Thereafter, children should be able to choose among an array of alternatives that include college studies, technical training, or youth apprenticeship programs, or, if the child is unwilling to stay in school, joining the workforce. Results can be achieved through high expectations, rigorous standards, and broad-based inducements. The assessment system is a series of examinations (including portfolios and performances) for which students can explicitly prepare, that measure higher order thinking and problem solving abilities, that reward hard work, and for which teachers serve as the students' coaches, mentors, and allies.

- **Focus on Accountability - The Virginia Outcome Accountability Project**

The World Class Education system will measure student mastery and hold schools accountable for the results. This is a fundamental change. In the past, schools have been evaluated on what goes in, not what comes out. The state looked at how many books were in the library, how many dollars per pupil were spent on materials, class size limits, instructional time, and so forth.

The assumption was that if schools did all these things, then children would learn. But by focusing on student *outcomes*, the state will be able to measure accurately the effectiveness of schools. This is the accountability that citizens -- and taxpayers -- expect.

- **Focus on Parental Involvement and Responsibility - Parents as Teachers**

Parents are the child's first teachers. All children need advocates. Many families have been impacted by economic and environmental conditions which affect their ability to balance conflicting needs. Schools must provide an environment in which parents, or parent surrogates, are encouraged to become participants in their child's education, motivating them to achieve to their highest potential. Parents must encourage their children to accept responsibility for meeting high expectations, and schools must foster communication with parents to enable both to fulfill their respective roles.

- **Focus on the Needs of the Individual Child - Child Advocacy**

While the cornerstones of the reform system are unyielding, instructional time and tactics will necessarily vary by community, by school, and by child. Individual schools and teachers must be encouraged to tailor instruction programs to the needs of each learner. The length of the school day or year needs to vary with the needs of the child, and alternative programs must be available to re-energize those youngsters who drop out because they cannot succeed in standard school settings.

It is absolutely critical that early childhood experiences, beginning at age four, be provided for all children, particularly those at risk of school failure. The data concerning the efficacy of early childhood education programs are irrefutable.

- **Focus on Promoting Equity in Educational Opportunities - Disparity**

Certain communities of the Commonwealth, because of historic disadvantage or limited local resources, have not had sufficient opportunity for achievement in education. Virginia's policies, including funding mechanisms, must take these disparities into account, in order to insure that children everywhere in the Commonwealth have a realistic opportunity to obtain a world class education.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The implementation strategies create the capacity to achieve the Vision. They are not goals in and of themselves, but are the means to an end. It is important to note that they are highly interrelated and represent a systematic approach to change. Unless all the implementation strategies are addressed, there is a high risk of failure.

- **Targeting Staff Development:** The single most important implementation strategy is staff development. Current teachers and other school personnel must be trained to understand and teach the Common Core. Like any large enterprise undergoing systemic change, schools need to invest in upgrading the skills of their key personnel. Preparation of new teachers will also require significant change.

- **Implementing a Shared Decision-Making Process:** The Common Core prescribes what children need to know, not the curriculum to get there. Each school and school district will be responsible for developing curricula appropriate to its student body. Responsibility and authority go hand in hand. School based staff, in collaboration with parents, must have a major role in instructional and resource allocation decisions and be trained to exercise that responsibility effectively.

- **Utilizing Research, Development, and Demonstration Capacity:** As human knowledge grows and the world changes, the Common Core of Learning and its assessment standards must also change. To develop the Common Core and keep it current, the State Board of Education has engaged the best minds in the Commonwealth and the nation.

The State Department of Education has been reorganized to accomplish its new mission of fostering fundamental and systemic changes in our schools by:

- undertaking research,
- identifying best practices and encouraging innovation,
- defining new standards and assisting school divisions to meet them,
- establishing transformation sites to exemplify best practices and current research, and
- enlisting public support for the World Class Education Initiative.

- **Recognizing Achievement:** As appropriate assessment standards are developed, schools and school personnel must be rewarded, both financially and with public recognition, for improved outcomes. Those schools and school systems that need help must be provided assistance to improve. In those rare cases where improvement does not occur, we need to create appropriate remedies, including, ultimately, interim state management to turn the situation around.

- **Creating Collaborative Partnerships:** Schools must take the leadership to develop partnerships with businesses, professions, trade associations, and labor unions in order to expose students and teachers to the world of work, and to create a meaningful dialogue that will inform the curriculum as to what knowledge and skills are necessary to secure and maintain high skilled jobs. Coordinated community-wide partnership efforts can be a powerful tool for preparing children for life and for work. Business must take high school educational accomplishment more seriously, rewarding high achievers with preference in employment opportunities.

- **Coordinating with Social Service Agencies:** Schools must provide local leadership to develop a collaborative approach among governmental agencies and, where appropriate, civic and service organizations, to focus health, nutrition and other social services on children and their families whose needs or dysfunction impede learning.

- **Integrating Technology:** We must develop and employ technology as an integral tool in the instructional process for all children, to provide additional opportunities for exceptional learners (both high and low achievers) to access alternative curricula, and to improve the productivity of teachers and school administrators. Schools and school systems must use technology more effectively.

- **Creating an Environment Conducive to Learning:** In order for children to learn, the learning environment must be safe and healthy. Issues of school violence and behavior must be addressed to create a psychological and physical comfort for students and teachers.

- **Improving Effectiveness:** The ultimate test of effectiveness is improved educational outcomes. Additional resources (beyond normal annual increases) will be required for such efforts as staff development and early childhood education. Further, salaries and working conditions of teachers must be substantially improved if we are to attract the best and brightest to the teaching profession.

However, much can be accomplished within existing resources. For example, no additional resources are required to implement, where appropriate, team teaching, ungraded classrooms, developmentally appropriate primary programs, multi-year connection between students and teachers, fewer periods in the school day, or interdisciplinary math/science courses.

Before requesting additional funds, schools and school systems need to assure the public that taxpayer funds are not spent on low-priority programs or unnecessary bureaucracy. Administrative structures must also reflect an emphasis on shared decision making, less bureaucratic organization, and greater commitment to the teaching and learning process. State and federal demands for detailed input, rather than outcome-based accountability, need to be reduced to permit schools to concentrate on teaching. School boards must be policy boards, focusing on broad guidelines, oversight and planning, while leaving to the professionals the day-to-day management of the schools.

- **Restructuring Organizational Elements:** Reform is often equated with restructuring or reconfiguring the structural elements of the education system -- changing grades, changing hours, and changing schedules. Although by themselves these structural elements, as well as others, will not be enough, they are essential in bringing our educational system to the preeminent position it should be in as we approach the next century.

CONCLUSION

If we fail to act, we will pay the price in human terms of those who failed to reach their potential. We will also pay the price in lower living standards and the much higher costs of welfare, law enforcement, prisons, and social disruption. Given the threat to our way of life and the prospects for our children posed by global competition and social disintegration, Virginia needs to move forward with dispatch and with a long-range commitment to developing a World Class Education System for all Virginians.