

**REPORT OF THE**

**SJR 385 Commission on  
Educational Accountability**

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



**SENATE DOCUMENT NO. 11**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND  
2002**



## SJR 385 Commission Members

Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr., *chairman*  
Delegate J. Paul Councill, Jr., *vice chairman*  
Senator William T. Bolling  
Senator R. Edward Houck  
Senator Stephen H. Martin  
Senator Stephen D. Newman  
Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr.  
Delegate Harry B. Blevins  
Delegate Mary T. Christian  
Delegate Phillip A. Hamilton  
Delegate Jay O'Brien  
Delegate John S. Reid  
Delegate Robert Tata  
Delegate Mitchell Van Yahres  
The Honorable Wilbert Bryant, Secretary of Education  
Kirk Schroder, President, Board of Education  
Dr. Jo Lynne DeMary, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Dr. William C. Boshier, Jr.  
Elizabeth B. Davis  
Henry H. Harrell  
Dorothy Jaeckle  
Edward Tilden Keil  
Lee Daniel Kent  
John O. Simpson  
Jacqueline W. Wilson

### **Staff**

*Division of Legislative Services*  
Kathleen G. Harris, *Senior Attorney*  
Gwen Foley, *Senior Operations Staff Assistant*

*Office of the Clerk, Senate of Virginia*  
Patty Lung, *Committee Clerk*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>I.</b>	<b>Authority and Study Objectives .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Implementation of the Standards of Accreditation .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	"Multiple Criteria" Supplementing the SOL Assessments.....	4
	<i>Promotion and Retention</i>	
	<i>Diploma Requirements</i>	
	<i>School Accreditation</i>	
	Test Security Procedures.....	9
	Academic Review Teams .....	10
	Public Perceptions of the SOL Assessments and Public Education ....	11
	Educator Perspectives: Practices Leading to Success on the	
	SOL Assessments.....	12
	Other Assessments of Student Performance: NAEP Scores.....	13
	Career and Technical Education .....	14
	Increasing Capacity for Teachers.....	16
	<i>Dispensing Medications in the Commonwealth's Public Schools</i>	
	<i>The School's Role in Diagnosis and Evaluation Procedures</i>	
	<i>Survey: Students Receiving ADHD Medications in Public School</i>	
	<i>Reporting of Prescription Thefts at School</i>	
	<i>Prevalence of ADHD Diagnoses in Southeast Virginia</i>	
<b>III.</b>	<b>Remediation Efforts and Year-Round Schools .....</b>	<b>17</b>
	Effectiveness of Remediation .....	19
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Recommendations .....</b>	<b>21</b>

## Appendices

Year 2001 Meetings of the SJR 498 Commission	
HJR 723 Special Task Force Meeting Summary	
Study Directives Addressed at 1999 Meetings	
Study Directives Addressed at 2000 Meetings	
DRAFT Focus Areas ~ 2001	
Senate Joint Resolution No. 498 (1999)	
Senate Joint Resolution No. 385 (2001)	
Proposed Legislation (2002 Session)	



## Executive Summary

### I. AUTHORITY AND STUDY OBJECTIVES

First established by the 1999 Session of the General Assembly pursuant to SJR 498, the Commission on Educational Accountability was continued by the 2001 Session of the General Assembly pursuant to SJR 385. Assisted by the HJR 566 (1999) Task Force Task Force on the Educational Needs of the 21st Century; the HJR 723 (1999) Task Force on the Impact of the Standards of Accreditation on Local School Division Budgets; and the HJR 302 (2000) Task Force to Examine the Need for Appropriate Alternative Forms of Standards of Learning Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education and Related Services, the Commission has produced two reports: Senate Document No. 52 (2000) and Senate Document No. 36 (2001).

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION

Consistent with its original directives to "review the Standards of Accreditation (SOA) and any included accountability mechanisms" and to "monitor the implementation of the Standards of Learning (SOL) and revised assessments," the Commission reviewed a variety of issues related to testing, graduation requirements, and school accreditation.

**"Multiple Criteria" Supplementing the SOL Assessments.** Figuring prominently in the Commission's work in 2001 was consideration of recent legislative actions addressing multiple criteria for school accreditation, graduation, and promotion and retention and remediation. Recommended by a special subcommittee of the House Education Committee in 2001 was HB 2163, which ultimately failed to pass. The bill provided for the awarding of additional credit to be counted toward attaining a particular accreditation status for a disparity in SOL scores of majority and minority students of ten points or fewer that results from increased assessment scores of all students and the percentage of teachers assigned to positions for which they are endorsed. SOL scores would count for no more than three-quarters of in calculating a school's accreditation rating. Additional measures introduced in the 2001 Session addressed the use of SOL assessments within diploma requirements, the inclusion of SOL test scores of certain students for school accreditation purposes, retaking of SOL assessments, independent evaluation of the SOL assessment process, and other issues.

**Test Security Procedures.** Test security procedures are designed to ensure that test scores are an accurate reflection of student performance and that no student is unfairly advantaged in taking the particular test. To ensure limited access to test items, SOL test booklets are secured when not in use; transmittal forms are completed to document chain of custody. Test booklets remain under lock and key until test day, when test examiners remove shrink-wrapped test packages. Examiner agreements indicate the tester will not divulge test contents, copy any portion of the test, or permit test access to unauthorized persons.

**Academic Review Teams.** Academic Review Teams visited 211 schools accredited with warning between November 15, 2000 and February 27, 2001. The teams prepared a report for each school detailing strengths, noting areas requiring improvement, and

suggestions for school improvement planning. Curriculum alignment--the match between the Standards of Learning curriculum and local written curriculum taught in the classroom--was cited as an area of improvement in 87 percent of the reviewed schools. Other frequently identified areas were the use of time and school scheduling practices; use of data to make instructional and planning decisions; and professional development opportunities.

**Public Perceptions of the SOL Assessments and Public Education.** According to the May 2001 Commonwealth Education Poll, conducted by VCU's Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI), a majority of respondents--52 percent--indicated the "positive impact" of education reform in Virginia; 16 percent of respondents indicated the SOL tests have supported school improvement "a lot," while 36 percent indicate these tests have helped "a little." Forty-four percent of respondents are very or somewhat confident that the SOL assessments are "an accurate indicator of student progress and school achievement"; 46 percent have little or no confidence in the validity of the tests. Identified by an overwhelming 82 percent of respondents as critical to improving student achievement was smaller class size. About 70 percent of respondents feel school funding is insufficient. Perceived areas of most critical need included teacher salaries and school construction and maintenance. Lack of parental involvement is perceived as the most pressing challenge in public education, followed by overcrowded classrooms.

**Educator Perspectives: Practices Leading to Success on the SOL Assessments.** A study by the Department of Education Governor's Best Practices Centers identified 16 effective practices for SOL test performance in 26 schools. Included among most important were assessment; curriculum alignment; curriculum mapping and pacing; data analysis; intervention strategies; leadership; and student motivation. Of these seven, leadership was identified most frequently. Other best practices were administrative support; classroom instruction; community and parent support; use of research-based programs; schedule considerations; school-wide focus on test success; staff development; teacher planning accommodations; and effective use of technology.

**Other Assessments of Student Performance: NAEP Scores.** Virginia fourth and eighth graders posted gains in mathematics scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In 1992, 19 percent of fourth graders achieved mathematics scores of "proficient"; that portion increased to 25 percent in 2000. Reflecting a nine percent increase from 1990, 26 percent of eighth graders achieved the "proficient" rating in mathematics in 2000. Virginia's gains in student performance are "significant," according to NAEP.

**Career and Technical Education.** To facilitate use of industry certifications or licensure for student-selected verified units of credit for high school graduation, the Board of Education approved 63 certification examinations in April, 2001. These verified units apply not to the "core" subjects of English, mathematics, science, and history, but to various student-selected tests in technology and other areas. Approved substitute tests for core academic subjects include, among others, International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement tests. The need for adequate state and other funding for CTE equipment continues; while business partnerships may make available industry equipment and tools as well as internships, schools themselves need equipment on-site for student learning.



**Increasing Capacity for Teachers.** Consistent with its original study directive to examine ways to increase the capacity of teachers, the Commission reviewed two measures that the 2001 Session declined to pass. Both measures addressed teacher quality: one through recruitment and retention incentives, and the other through teacher preparation. HB 2823 would have established the Educators' Higher Education Opportunity Program, comprised of the voluntary contributions of full-time, licensed educators to fund savings trust accounts pursuant to the Virginia College Savings Plan. Also examined was SJR 357, which would have requested the Joint Task Force on the K-12 Teaching Profession in Virginia, jointly established by the State Council for Higher Education and the Board in fall, 2000, to "examine the staffing levels in the teacher education programs in the colleges and universities."

#### **REMEDIATION EFFORTS AND YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLS**

Directed to carry forward the work of the joint subcommittee on remediation, the Commission explored year-round school calendars and related remediation issues. From an initial six schools in two divisions in 1997, the number of schools offering a year-round initiative grew to 33 for the 2001-02 school year. Situated in 11 divisions, the majority of the initiatives are in elementary schools. The calendars typically use "45-15" schedule, providing 45 instructional days, followed by a 15-day break used as an "intersession" for remediation or enrichment opportunities.

A review of 31 studies of the effect of summer school on the achievement of at-risk secondary students in 12 states indicated high school and elementary school students showed greater gains than did middle school students. Students of middle- and high-socioeconomic status showed greater improvement. Program characteristics contributing to effectiveness were focus on deficiencies; required rather than voluntary attendance; smaller class size; individualized, rather than group, instruction; parental involvement; licensed, rather than unlicensed, teachers; and collaborative planning.

#### **IV. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Continuing its pursuit of a wide range of education reform issues in its third year of study, the Commission determined that ensuring educational accountability for Virginia's public schools remains a critical concern. Therefore, the Commission has agreed upon the following recommendations:

*Recommendation 1: That the Board of Education, with the assistance of the Department of Education and the Accountability Advisory Committee, continue to examine the use of multiple criteria to supplement the Standards of Learning assessments for purposes of school accreditation, graduation requirements, and promotion/retention policies.*

*Recommendation 2: That the Commission on Educational Accountability be continued for one additional year.*

\*\*\*



# REPORT OF THE SJR 385 COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

## I. AUTHORITY AND STUDY OBJECTIVES

First established by the 1999 Session of the General Assembly pursuant to SJR 498, the 20-member Commission on Educational Accountability was originally comprised of 11 legislative members, six nonlegislative members, and three ex officio members. The initial mission of the SJR 498 Commission was a comprehensive one; the Commission was to:

- i. Review the Standards of Accreditation (SOA) and any included accountability mechanisms;
- ii. Monitor the implementation of the Standards of Learning (SOL) and revised assessments;
- iii. Consider the work and recommendations of other recent study committees, such as the Commission on the Future of Public Education (HJR 196—1996), the Joint Subcommittee on Remediation (HJR 572—1999), the Commission on Educational Infrastructure (HJR 670—1999), the Standing Joint Subcommittee on School Dropout Prevention (HJR 241—1996), and the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Efficacy and Appropriateness of Establishing a School Incentive Reward Program in the Commonwealth (HJR 165—1996);
- iv. Develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of schools, teachers, and students to meet increasingly rigorous academic standards;
- v. Examine issues raised in SJR 344 (1999) regarding the effects on the Commonwealth's young people of failure to obtain a diploma pursuant to requirements of the SOA;
- vi. Evaluate the efficacy, appropriateness, and application of the Commonwealth's statutes, regulations, and policies governing the academic assessment of students who transfer into Virginia's public schools (SJR 389—1999);
- vii. Determine the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a certificate of completion for certain vocational programs in public high schools (HJR 593—1999);
- viii. Determine the efficacy and appropriateness of the Commonwealth's system of funding the Standards of Quality (SOQ) for public schools (HJR 657—1999);
- ix. Study the instructional needs of students and teachers in the public schools of the Commonwealth (HJR 691—1999);
- x. Examine the impact of the SOL and the SOA on teachers, urban and small rural school divisions, and educationally at-risk students, giving particular attention to the preparation of teachers and time to instruct students to meet the SOL, the ability of urban and small rural school divisions to meet and maintain the requirements for accreditation, the effect of the SOL tests on grade promotion and retention of students and the awarding of high school diplomas, and the remediation of students who fail the SOL tests (HJR 721—1999);
- xi. Confer with the joint subcommittee established pursuant to SJR 447 (1999), regarding issues pertaining to overage students, adult students who are returning to school, and vocational-technical education;
- xii. Collaborate, coordinate, and receive regular reports of the Commission's special task force established pursuant to HJR 566 (1999) studying the integration of the SOL with the secondary school level curricula and workforce development skills;

- xiii. Collaborate, coordinate, and receive regular reports of the Commission's special task force studying the impact of the SOA on local school division budgets, in accordance with HJR 586 (1999) and HJR 723 (1999);
- xiv. Collaborate and confer with the joint subcommittee established to examine the efficacy and appropriateness of adjusting SOQ funding for certain small school divisions (SJR 481--1999);
- xv. Confer and coordinate the work of the Commission with other legislative study committees which have been charged to examine related issues to avoid duplication; and
- xvi. Consider such other issues as it deems appropriate.

**Second Year of Study.** Recognizing the need to pursue additional educational accountability issues, the General Assembly expanded the mission of the SJR 498 Commission in the 2000 Session by adding an additional special task force and directing specific issues for study. The passage of HJR 302 in 2000 created an eight-member special task force composed entirely of members of the Commission on Educational Accountability to examine the need for appropriate alternative forms of Standards of Learning assessments for students receiving special education and related services and to continue the work of the Joint Subcommittee on Remediation. The special task force was to consider, among other things, current state-of-the-art testing and assessment of students receiving special education and related services; the development of appropriate forms of Standards of Learning assessments that will provide students receiving special education and related services with a range of modifications and accommodations to meet their educational needs; and such other issues as it deems appropriate.

Incorporating HJR 273 (Van Yahres--continuing remediation study) in HJR 302, the 2000 Session directed the full Commission to continue the work of the Joint Subcommittee on Remediation, and to "become familiar with the issues and policies regarding the joint subcommittee's work and its subsequent findings and recommendations throughout the course of its study so that efforts are not duplicated, and complete the objectives in the joint subcommittee's work plan for 2000."

With the adoption of HJR 159 (Councill) and SJR 248 (Hanger), the Commission, in cooperation with the Board of Education, the State Council of Higher Education, the Senate Committee on Finance, and the House Committee on Appropriations, was to study the demand for and preparation of classroom teachers. The resolutions direct the Commission to:

- i. "project the number of classroom teachers needed in Virginia over the next ten years;
- ii. review the teacher education process;
- iii. assess recruitment and retention efforts;
- iv. evaluate procedures for awarding continuing contracts, including how Virginia may retain the most capable teachers and replace teachers who do not meet the qualifications, standards, and expectations set for teachers;
- v. consider the issues associated with compensation of teachers;
- vi. determine the adequacy of pre-service and in-service professional development of teachers; and
- vii. recommend ways to attract and retain an adequate supply of teachers in Virginia."

The Commission has produced two reports: Senate Document No. 52 (2000) and Senate Document No. 36 (2001).

**Third Year of Study.** The 2001 Session of the General Assembly continued for one year the work of the SJR 498 Commission on Educational Accountability and its three task forces by adopting SJR 385. The resolution expanded the membership of the Commission to 25 members: to include 14 legislative members, eight nonlegislative members, and three ex officio members, appointed as follows: six members of the Senate; eight members of the House of Delegates; one parent of a child who is enrolled in the public schools of the Commonwealth, one public school teacher, and one school principal, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; one division superintendent, one representative of the Virginia School Boards Association, and three citizens at large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the Secretary of Education, the President of the Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall serve ex officio with full voting privileges.

Although not specifically assigning additional issues to the Commission or its task forces for consideration, the resolution notes that "another year of study will enable the Commission to pursue more fully its mission and to address more effectively the myriad of educational accountability issues assigned to it...." The Commission was, however, requested by the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education and Health to "include the concepts presented in HB 2823 in its 2001 study plan and make any recommendations or findings on this matter as it may deem appropriate."

Also continued by the resolution was the work of the Commission's three task forces: the HJR 566 (1999) Task Force on the Educational Needs of the 21st Century; the HJR 723 (1999) Task Force on the Impact of the Standards of Accreditation on Local School Division Budgets; and the HJR 302 (2000) Task Force to Examine the Need for Appropriate Alternative Forms of Standards of Learning Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education and Related Services.

Task force memberships were expanded for 2001. The HJR 566 Task Force, previously comprised of 15 members, added one member of the House of Delegates to bring its membership total to 16. The HJR 723 Task Force encompassed 10 legislative members, adding two Delegates and one Senator to its previous roster of seven legislators. Finally, the HJR 302 Task Force again consisted entirely of full Commission members, with the addition of one Delegate and one Senator, to increase its membership to 10 legislators.

The resolution provided for three meetings for each of the task forces, and four meetings for the full Commission. The Commission and task force meetings were to be scheduled consecutively on the same days, to the extent practicable, to conserve costs.

The HJR 566 and HJR 323 Task Forces did not meet in 2001; the HJR 723 Task Force met in November 2001 to review the findings of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission study on funding for the Standards of Quality.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS OF ACCREDITATION

Consistent with its original directives to "review the Standards of Accreditation (SOA) and any included accountability mechanisms" and to "monitor the implementation of the Standards of Learning (SOL) and revised assessments," the Commission received testimony from Department of Education representatives regarding the inclusion of diversity within the history Standards of Learning; the ongoing review of the teacher resource guide amplifying the history SOL curriculum; and, as of the Commission's June 2001 meeting, the approval of 81 substitute tests for SOL assessments and the use of 72 various career and technical examinations and licenses for obtaining verified units of credit.<sup>1</sup>

### "Multiple Criteria" Supplementing the SOL Assessments

Figuring prominently in the Commission's work in 2001 was consideration of recent legislative actions addressing multiple criteria for school accreditation, graduation, and promotion and retention and remediation.

**Promotion and retention.** The current Standards of Accreditation (SOA) provide that results of Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in grades K-8 are to be "part of a set of multiple criteria for determining the promotion or retention of students." The regulations are silent as to promotion/retention policies for grades 9-12, grades in which verified units of credit (earned by passing SOL assessments and successfully completing courses) are required for a diploma. The division superintendent must "certify to the Department of Education that the division's promotion/retention policy does not exclude students from membership in a grade or participation in a course in which SOL tests are to be administered." (8 VAC 20-131-30 A, B).

**Diploma requirements.** The SOA do not specifically make the awarding of diplomas contingent upon the passage of SOL tests; however, the accumulation of a specific number of standard and verified units of credit, will be required for standard and modified diplomas, beginning with the ninth grade class of 2001 (graduating class of 2003). The standard unit of credit is based on the minimum 140 clock hours of instruction and "successful completion of the requirements of the course." The verified unit of credit is awarded upon passage of the relevant SOL test, or additional tests approved by the Board of Education, as well as the course. (8 VAC 20-131-110 A, B.)

During a transition period, beginning with the ninth grade classes of 2001, 2002, and 2003 (graduating classes of 2004-2006), students must earn 22 standard units of credit in specified courses, and two verified units of credit in English and four verified units "of the student's own choosing" to obtain a Standard Diploma. For the ninth grade class of 2004 (graduating class of 2007), receipt of a Standard Diploma will be based on 22 standard units of credit in specific courses, and six verified units--two in English, one each in mathematics, science, history, and one in a course of the student's choosing. (8 VAC 20-131-50 B). The verified unit arrangement during the transition period has been referred to as a "two by four" model.

---

<sup>1</sup>June 18, 2001, Meeting Summary.

### Credits Required for Graduation with a Standard Diploma

(Graduating class of 2007 and thereafter ~ 8 VAC 20-131-50 B 4)

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Units Required
English	4	2
Mathematics	3	1
Laboratory Science	3	1
History and Social Sciences	3	1
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Practical Arts	1	
Electives	6	
Student Selected Test		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>

No transition period for the award of verified units of credit exists for the Advanced Studies Diploma; beginning with the ninth grade class of 2001 (graduating class of 2004), students must earn 24 standard units of credit in specified courses and nine verified units--two each in English, mathematics, science, history, and one in a course of the student's choosing. (8 VAC 20-131-50 C).

### Credits Required for Graduation with an Advanced Studies Diploma

(Graduating class of 2007 and thereafter ~ 8 VAC 20-131-50 C 2)

Discipline Area	Standard Units of Credit Required	Verified Units Required
English	4	2
Mathematics	4	2
Laboratory Science	4	2
History and Social Sciences	4	2
Foreign Language	3	
Health and Physical Education	2	
Fine Arts or Practical Arts	1	
Electives	2	
Student Selected Test		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>

The Board of Education has approved a number of additional tests that may serve as substitute tests end-of-course SOL tests to earn verified units of credit. As outlined in Superintendent's Memo No. 73, dated May 11, 2001, the Board approved tests at its April 26, 2001 meeting consistent with the approval criteria set forth in the Standards of Accreditation. The test must be knowledge-based; standardized; graded independently; administered on a multi-state or international basis; and, for used in a particular academic subject, "measure content that incorporates or exceeds the SOL content in the course for which verified credit is given." (8 VAC 20-131-110 B).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Division of Legislative Services, SJR 385 Commission on Educational Accountability Worksheet on SOLs/Multiple Criteria ~ November 2001, Issues and Information.

**School accreditation.** The Standards of Accreditation state that schools shall be accredited based primarily on student achievement, as evidenced by SOL test scores. (8 VAC 20-131-280 C). More specifically, accreditation ratings are based on "the percentage of students passing SOL tests or approved additional tests ... or on a trailing three-year average that includes the current year scores and the scores from the two most recent years in each applicable academic area, or the current year's scores, whichever is higher." (8 VAC 20-131-280 C 3). Special purpose schools are to be evaluated "on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board..." (8 VAC 20-131-280 D). After a transition period ending in 2009, schools will ultimately be awarded one of four accreditation ratings: Fully Accredited, Conditionally Accredited, Accredited with Warning, and Accreditation Denied. (8 VAC 20-131-300 A). Provisional accreditation benchmarks establish passing rates for schools through 2003.

Having considered and ultimately carried over a number of measures from the 2000 Session addressing the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments and "multiple criteria" for school accreditation and diploma purposes, the House Committee on Education agreed in 2000 that a special subcommittee be appointed to examine the issues raised and to develop a single measure for consideration by the 2001 Session. Subsequently, the chairman appointed a five-member special subcommittee, comprised of Delegates Darner, Hamilton, Jackson, Reid, and Rhodes. This subcommittee primarily addressed multiple criteria for school accreditation purposes.

HB 2163 (Jackson), was the recommended measure produced by the group. The bill provided that criteria for the accreditation of all schools must include results of the SOL assessments, excluding the scores of students pursuing alternative education; improvement in SOL assessment scores; and student attendance rates. The criteria for accrediting all schools would also provide for the awarding of additional credit to be counted toward attaining a particular accreditation status for (i) a disparity in the aggregated SOL scores of majority and minority students of ten points or fewer that results from increased assessment scores of all students and (ii) the percentage of teachers who are assigned to positions for which they have an endorsement. The results of any SOL assessments would not account for more than three-quarters of a school's rating for accreditation purposes.

In addition, the accreditation standards for high schools would include school drop out rates, with data distinguishing verified transfers and students participating in a GED program and the percentage of students who do not receive a diploma but either (a) pass an examination in a career and technical education field that confers certification from a recognized industry, or trade or professional association, or (b) acquire a professional license in a career and technical education field from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Additional criteria for the accreditation of middle schools would include school drop out rates, with data distinguishing verified transfers; elementary school criteria would include the number of students who have been retained for more than one year in grades two through five. The criteria for accrediting elementary schools shall also include, as an additional credit that might be counted toward attaining a particular accreditation status, the percentage of students achieving above the fiftieth percentile on the Stanford 9 assessment.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup>November 15, 2001, Meeting Summary; June 18, 2001 Meeting Summary.



## Provisional Accreditation Benchmarks Through 2003

8 VAC 20-131-320

Each School Must Meet the Following Pass-Rate Benchmarks in Tests Given in the Academic Years Indicated to Earn the Rating of Provisional Accreditation/Meets State Standards:

	English	Math	Science	History/Soc. Studies
<b>Grade 3</b>				
1999-00	60%	55%		
2000-01	63%	60%		
2001-02	66%	65%		
2002-03	70%	70%		
<b>Grade 5 (includes tests given in Grade 4)</b>				
1999-00	60%	55%	60%	40%
2000-01	63%	60%	63%	45%
2001-02	66%	65%	66%	50%
2002-03	70%	70%	70%	55%
<b>Middle (includes any tests given in middle school grades)</b>				
1999-00	60%	55%	60%	40%
2000-01	63%	60%	63%	45%
2001-02	66%	65%	66%	50%
2002-03	70%	70%	70%	55%
<b>High School</b>				
1999-00	60%	55%	55%	40%
2000-01	63%	60%	60%	45%
2001-02	66%	65%	65%	50%
2002-03	70%	70%	70%	55%

1. Schools that do not meet the benchmarks in one or more academic areas will be rated Provisionally Accredited/Needs Improvement unless the school is rated "Accredited with Warning."
2. Schools that are 20 or more percentage points below the benchmarks in any academic area will be rated Accredited with Warning in (specific academic area or areas).
3. The Provisionally Accredited ratings may not be earned after school year 2002-03.
4. Schools must achieve pass rates of 70% in all applicable core academic areas to be rated Fully Accredited except that, beginning with school year 2003-04, schools must achieve pass rates of 75% in third and fifth grade English and 50% in third grade science and history/social science. In schools housing grades kindergarten through 3, the accreditation rating shall be based on the English and mathematics scores only.
5. In determining accreditation ratings, a single pass rate will be calculated by combining third and fifth grade English and third and fifth grade mathematics scores.
6. In determining the accreditation ratings during the transition period, covering ratings earned during 1999-2000 through 2002-03, in schools housing grades kindergarten through 5, the accreditation ratings shall be calculated by using the fifth grade scores alone or by combining the scores of all SOL tests given in grades 3 through 5 in science and by combining the scores of all SOL tests given in grades 3 through 5 history/social science, whichever is higher. In schools housing grades kindergarten through 3, the accreditation rating shall be based on the English and mathematics scores only.

Additional measures introduced in the 2001 Session addressed the use of SOL assessments within diploma requirements, the inclusion of SOL test scores of certain students for school accreditation purposes, retaking of SOL assessments, independent evaluation of the SOL assessment process, and other issues. Only two of these measures--HB 2144/SB1324--were enacted. Companion measures, HB 2144 and SB 1324 provided that the boards of visitors or other governing body of Virginia's public institutions of higher education cannot consider the accreditation status of a Virginia public high school in making admissions determinations for students who have earned a diploma in accordance with the regulations of the Board.

**School Accreditation Ratings and Effective Dates**  
Standards of Accreditation ~ 8 VAC 20-131-300 (July 2000)

<b>Effective Dates</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Academic Years 2000-2003	<b>Fully Accredited</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% pass rate in 4 core academic areas</li> </ul> <b>Elementary schools (K-5):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English scores for 3 &amp; 5 combined; Math scores for 3 &amp; 5 combined</li> <li>Science and history scores for 5th grade only (none for grade 3) OR combining Science in 3 &amp; 5 and history in 3 &amp; 5, whichever is higher</li> <li>if science or history combined, must meet 70%</li> </ul>
	<b>Provisionally Accredited/Meets State Standards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets provisional benchmarks, but not fully accredited</li> </ul>
	<b>Provisionally Accredited/ Needs Improvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fails to meet benchmark in one or more areas)</li> </ul>
	<b>Accredited with Warning (in specific academic area or areas)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20 points below benchmark in any area</li> </ul>
Academic years 2003-2004; 2004-2005 only	<b>Accredited with Warning (in specific academic area or areas)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>simply fails to meet pass rates to be Fully Accredited</li> </ul>
Academic years 2003-2004 and beyond	<b>Fully Accredited</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% pass rate in 4 core subjects EXCEPT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75 % in English, grades 3 &amp; 5; 50 % in Science, grade 3; 50% in History/social science, grade 3</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Academic years 2005-2006 and beyond	<b>Fully Accredited</b> same as above
	<b>Accredited with Warning (in specific academic area)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully accredited but then fails to maintain</li> <li>3 year limit</li> </ul>
	<b>Accreditation Denied</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fails to meet scores for Fully Accredited, unless Accredited with Warning after having previously achieved Fully Accredited</li> </ul>
	<b>Accreditation Denied/Improving School Near Accreditation (ends 2009)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never Fully Accredited; must apply to BOE</li> <li>70% English pass rate; 75% in 3 &amp; 5</li> <li>combined 60 % in other 3 core academics</li> <li>Pass rates in each failed area must improve 25 % points over 1999 scores</li> <li>Annual improvement required</li> </ul>
All years	<b>Conditionally Accredited</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New schools comprised of students from one or more existing schools</li> <li>One year</li> </ul>

The issue of "multiple criteria" will merit Board of Education examination, as Kirk Schroder, Commission member and Board of Education President, reported that the Board of

Education will review both HB 2163 (Jackson); HB 2122 (Darner), bills forwarded for consideration by the Senate Committee on Education and Health, at its November meeting. Also to be reviewed are the recommendations of the Virginia Education Coalition, which includes the Virginia Education Association, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, and other education organizations, and recommendations from the Board's Accountability Advisory Committee.

The Virginia Education Coalition has endorsed the development of an appeals process for the SOL assessments; President Schroder expressed his personal preference for a local appeals process, consistent with Board guidelines, applicable to students during the transition period (graduating classes 2004 through 2006). A sunset provision would prompt revisiting the issue after an implementation period. Such an appeals process might include "blending" coursework grades with SOL scores. Appeals processes are in place in North Carolina, Massachusetts, and other states. Balancing the need for flexibility with the goals of high standards, consistency, and objectivity remains a challenge in creating and implementing test score appeals processes.

Seventy percent or more of Virginia public schools now meet the requirements for full accreditation or for provisional accreditation/meets state standards. A total of 129 schools are accredited with warning. Waiver procedures within the Standards of Accreditation were also briefly noted. Individual accreditation plans are contemplated in the SOA to accommodate "[s]pecial purpose schools such as regional, special education, alternative, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment...." (8 VAC 20-131-280 D). Board guidelines detail the alternative evaluation of these schools.

Other SOL assessment issues explored by the Commission included annual testing requirements contained in the pending reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); the Modified Standard Diploma, created for students with disabilities and requiring no verified units of credit; the creation of a special subcommittee of the House Committee on Education to examine graduation requirements and the use SOL tests to earn verified units of credit; the need to avoid creating a "dual system" of graduation requirements or diploma tracks for disadvantaged students; the challenge of determining alternative, appropriate methods of demonstrating acquired knowledge and skills; and the use of pre-session programs by some school divisions to assist out-of-state transfer students.<sup>4</sup>

### **Test Security Procedures**

Implemented during Literacy Passport Test (LPT) use, test security procedures are designed to ensure that test scores are an accurate reflection of student performance and that no student is "unfairly advantaged" in taking the particular test. To ensure limited access to test items, SOL test booklets are secured when not in use. Transmittal forms are completed document chain of custody. The booklets remain in a locked location, under the division director of testing (DDOT). Booklets are transmitted to the school test coordinator (STC) four days before testing. The booklets remain under lock and key until test day, when test

---

<sup>4</sup>November 15, 2001, Meeting Summary.

examiners remove shrink-wrapped test packages. The numbers of tests are verified. Post-testing, booklets are returned to the STC and ultimately stored and locked. Differences among individual school testing days and class periods were noted, as was local school division desire to retain this flexibility.

Division and examiner test security agreements are executed prior to testing. Examiner agreements indicate the tester will not divulge test contents, copy any portion of the test, or permit test access to unauthorized persons.

Discussion focused on the evolution of the test security process, "rewording" of SOL test questions for instructional purposes, and the determination of appropriate consequences for test violations by school employees. Currently, the Department does not investigate employee test violations; however, while these matters typically rest with the local school division, the particular infraction may warrant student re-taking tests.<sup>5</sup>

### **Academic Review Teams**

The Standards of Accreditation describe a "school academic review process and monitoring plan designed to assist schools rated as Accredited with Warning" and require schools rated Accredited with Warning to "prepare a school improvement plan..." (8 VAC 20-131-310; 8 VAC 20-1331-340). Academic Review Teams visited 211 schools accredited with warning between November 15, 2000 and February 27, 2001. Of these 211 schools, 186 received the warning status due to failing scores in mathematics or English, or both. Spending three to five days visiting classrooms (for a total of 796 review days) talking with teachers, and reviewing documents, these teams of two each prepared a report for each school detailing strengths, noting areas requiring improvement, and suggestions for school improvement planning in curriculum alignment, use of instructional time and scheduling practices, use of data in making instructional and planning decisions, and professional development. The review teams analyzed systems, practices, and policy, rather than individual personnel. In turn, this evaluation process was itself reviewed by principals and teachers.

Curriculum alignment--the match between the Standards of Learning curriculum and local written curriculum taught in the classroom--was cited as an area of improvement in 87 percent of the reviewed schools. Most frequently noted was the alignment of the local written curriculum, the incorporation of resource guides into this local curriculum, and the pacing of instruction. Suggestions included ensuring teacher use of resource guides and using student performance data to adjust the pacing of instruction.

Appearing as an area for improvement in 77 percent of schools accredited with a warning was the use of time and school scheduling practices. Most frequently cited as needing improvement were adequate instructional time to accommodate a variety of teaching methods; providing intervention or remediation during the school day; and enhancing teacher planning and collaboration on instructional concerns.

---

<sup>5</sup>September 10, 2001, Meeting Summary.

Use of data to make instructional and planning decisions was cited as an area for improvement for 83 percent of the reviewed schools. Most often noted for improvement were using data to make various instructional decisions, training staff in data analysis, and disaggregating data. Professional development opportunities required improvement in 79 percent of schools, with the use of data to identify professional development needs and the inclusion of peer modeling, coaching, and problem-solving in these initiatives.

An overwhelming majority of principals--92 percent--and 76 percent of teachers agreed that the purpose of the academic review process was clear, the allotted time sufficient, and data collection methods appropriate. In assessing the implementation of the academic review, 97 percent of principals and 88 percent of teachers agreed that the process was conducted fairly and objectively and in an organized, nondisruptive manner. When asked if the reviewed school could conduct its own academic review, 87 percent of principals and 71 percent of teachers agreed, and also reported the review findings useful, the school's needs assessed, and review purposes achieved. Recommendations for schools generally included the development of comprehensive curriculum guidelines, training for teachers in methodology, use of data, and professional development tailored to individual school needs. In providing future technical assistance, the Department of Education will make adjustments to the academic review process based on the data, develop next steps, and assist in curriculum development and other local efforts.

Commission discussion focused on the need to support the Department of Education in its efforts to provide analysis and technical assistance to these schools and also cited the need for disaggregated test score data in the "evolving" SOL testing process.<sup>6</sup>

### **Public Perceptions of the SOL Assessments and Public Education**

The May 2001 Commonwealth Education Poll, conducted by VCU's Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI), targeted Virginians' opinions regarding public education in the Commonwealth. Neither region of residence nor property ownership status affected responses to the survey questions, which were posed to 814 adults in mid-April of this year.

A majority of respondents--52 percent--indicated the "positive impact" of education reform in Virginia; only 16 percent of respondents feel that public education has declined in the last five years. The greatest positive impact was reported by lower-income families. Only 30 percent of Virginia households are responsible for the 1.2 million school-age children in the Commonwealth; parents of schoolchildren tended to respond more favorably regarding public education. While most parents feel the quality of public education has stayed the same or improved, only 17 percent feel this quality has declined. Similar patterns of response came from families with school employees.

Responses were more evenly divided regarding whether the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments have helped improve school performance; 16 percent of respondents indicated the tests have supported improvement "a lot," while 36 percent indicate these tests have helped "a little." Thirty-one percent responded that the assessments have not improved

---

<sup>6</sup>September 10, 2001, Meeting Summary.

public education. Forty-four percent of respondents are very or somewhat confident that the SOL assessments are "an accurate indicator of student progress and school achievement"; 46 percent have little or no confidence in the validity of the tests.

Identified by an overwhelming 82 percent of respondents as critical to improving student achievement was smaller class size. Continuing training for teachers was valued by about 60 percent response rate. Also seen as helping student performance--"a lot" by 51 percent and "a little" by 26 percent, was improved teacher compensation.

Perceptions regarding school funding were very clear; about 70 percent feel it is insufficient, and 57 percent of respondents were willing to pay higher taxes to increase funding for public education. An increased sales tax was supported by 47 percent, with the income tax and personal property tax garnering only 16 and 13 percent, respectively. Perceived areas of most critical need included teacher salaries and school construction and maintenance. Lack of parental involvement is perceived as the most pressing challenge in public education, followed by overcrowded classrooms.

**Commonwealth Education Poll ~ May 2001**  
**Is this a problem for public schools in your community?**

	Major problem	Minor problem	No problem	Don't Know/ No Answer
Lack of parent involvement	56%	27%	10%	7%
Overcrowded classrooms	51%	30%	11%	8%
Student use of alcohol/drugs	42%	35%	10%	14%
Violence in the schools	30%	48%	15%	7%
Poor quality teachers	26%	41%	24%	10%
Buildings unsafe/unhealthy	16%	41%	35%	8%

Character education is seen as very important and somewhat important by 72 and 22 percent of respondents. That parents and schools should share responsibility for this education is supported by 46 percent; 53 percent feel that only the parent should have this primary responsibility.<sup>7</sup>

**Educator Perspectives: Practices Leading to Success on the SOL Assessments**

Having reviewed research and worked with various schools, the staff of the Department of Education Governor's Best Practices Centers identified 16 effective practices in 26 schools (16 elementary, seven middle, and three high schools) in which high numbers of students qualified for free or reduced price lunch and in which SOL test scores were high.

The study incorporated interviews of teachers, principals and central office personnel and ratings to responses to various questions about the identified practices and related activities within each practice. Identified practices included among most important were assessment; curriculum alignment; curriculum mapping and pacing; data analysis;

<sup>7</sup>September 10, 2001, Meeting Summary.

intervention strategies; leadership; and student motivation. Of these seven, leadership was identified most frequently. The remaining best practices were administrative support; classroom instruction; community and parent support; use of research-based programs; schedule considerations; school-wide focus on test success; staff development; teacher planning accommodations; and use of technology.<sup>8</sup>

**Other Assessments of Student Performance: NAEP Scores**

Virginia fourth and eighth graders posted gains in mathematics scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). A Congressionally mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics, U. S. Department of Education, NAEP selects nationally representative samples of students from the 40 participating states to take the assessment. Approximately 2,500 Virginia students from 100 schools and each tested grade level participated. In 1992, 19 percent of fourth graders achieved mathematics scores of "proficient"; that portion increased to 25 percent in 2000. Reflecting a nine percent increase from 1990, 26 percent of eighth graders achieved the "proficient" rating in mathematics in 2000. Virginia's gains in student performance are "significant," according to NAEP.

**NAEP Test Results: Mathematics--Year 2000**

**Grade 4 Results--Average Scale Scores**

	1992	1996	2000
Virginia	221	223	230
Southeast	210	216	220
Nation	219	222	226

**Grade 4 Results--Percent at or above "Proficient"**

	1992	1996	2000
Virginia	19	19	25
Southeast	11	14	19
Nation	17	20	25

**Grade 8 Results--Average Scale Scores**

	1990	1992	1996	2000
Virginia	264	268	270	277
Southeast	254	259	264	265
Nation	262	267	271	274

**Grade 8 Results--Percent at or above "Proficient"**

	1990	1992	1996	2000
Virginia	17	19	21	26
Southeast	12	13	16	18
Nation	15	20	23	26

<sup>8</sup>September 10, 2001, Meeting Summary.

Mathematics scores for African-American and Hispanic students also showed improvement. An 11 percent and a seven percent increase in test scores in 1992 and 1996, respectively, was witnessed by fourth grade Hispanic students, with 59 percent rated at or above basic achievement in 2000. Similarly, 56 percent of Hispanic eight graders achieved this rating in 2000, up from 44 percent in 1992 and 1996 and 31 percent in 1990

Scores for Virginia's African-American students consistently surpass those of African-Americans nationwide. In 2000, 46 percent of African-American fourth graders rated "at or above basic achievement," compared to 34 and 25 percent in 1996 and 1992, respectively. A total of 38 percent of African-American eight graders achieved this rating in 2000, up from 26 percent in 1996, 29 percent in 1992, and 26 percent in 1990.

Consistent with improved NAEP scores are rising test scores for Virginia students on the Stanford 9, another national test used in Virginia public schools. NAEP reading and writing scores in 1998 indicated Virginia fourth and eighth graders outperforming students in the Southeast and nationwide. In February 2001, the National Educational Goals Panel (NEGP) cited the Commonwealth as leading the nation in the percentage of 11th and 12th graders earning a score of three or higher on the Advanced Placement (AP) examinations.<sup>9</sup>

**Career and Technical Education**

In pursuing its study directives, the Commission also addressed developments in career and technical education and the use of industry certifications in obtaining verified units of credit. The Standards of Accreditation (SOA) require a minimum of eleven course offerings in career and technical education must be available at secondary schools; these courses may be offered at regional centers as well as at the individual schools. (8 VAC 20-131-100 B).

**2000-2001 Program Area Enrollments ~ Career and Technical Education  
Grades 6-12**

Program Area	Enrollment
Agricultural Education	26,890
Business and Information Technology	174,754
Family and Consumer Services	135,161
Health and Medical Sciences	4,754
Marketing	23,978
Technology Education	144,103
Trade and Industrial Education	34,958
Education for Employment	14,574
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>559,172</b>

Recent developments in career and technical education include the Board of Education approval of two diploma seals recognizing exemplary student achievement in

<sup>9</sup>September 10, 2001 Meeting Summary.



career and technical education. The Board of Education Career and Technical Education Seal is earned upon obtaining either a standard or advanced studies diploma, completing a prescribed sequence of courses in a career and technical education concentration or specialization, and maintaining at least a B average in those courses or passing a Board-approved industry certification examination or acquiring a professional license in a career and technical education area. Similarly, the Seal of Advanced Mathematics and Technology requires a standard or advanced studies diploma, at least a B average in the requisite mathematics courses and passage of an exam for a Board-approved industry certification in information technology, or passage of a Board-approved exam granting college-level credit in technology or computer science. The Board of Education approved criteria for the selection and approval of these certifications and licenses for these two seals in September, 2000.

Reflecting SOA criteria for the approval of substitute tests for earning verified units of credit, the criteria for approving certifications and licenses require, among other things, that the test must be (i) standardized and graded independently of the enrolling school or school division; (ii) knowledge-based; (iii) administered on a multistate or international basis; and the course of study for the certification or license must prepare the student for an occupation or for college credit in an occupational area that is "technology-driven." To date, approved industry certification examinations total 63, addressing more than 75 different career and technical education courses or combinations.

To facilitate use of industry certifications or licensure for student-selected verified units of credit for high school graduation, the Board of Education approved 63 certification examinations in April, 2001. These verified units apply not to the "core" subjects of English, mathematics, science, and history, but to various student-selected tests in technology and other areas. Approved substitute tests for core academic subjects include, among others, International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement tests. The 2001 Session of the General Assembly had considered SB 1056 (Quayle), which would have authorized the Board of Education to substitute industry certification and state licensure examinations for Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments for the purpose of enhancing the quality of career and technical education and awarding verified units of credit for career and technical education courses, where appropriate. This bill also would have amended Standard 3 of the Standards of Quality to allow the Board to provide, in the requirements for the verified units of credit, that appropriate and relevant industry certification or state licensure examinations may be substituted for correlated SOL examinations and that students completing career and technical education programs that are designed to enable such students to pass such industry certification examinations or state licensure examinations may be awarded, upon obtaining satisfactory scores on such industry certification or licensure examinations, appropriate verified units of credit for one or more career and technical education classes into which relevant SOL for various classes taught at the same level have been integrated. Governor's amendments that would have limited the use of these substitute tests to verified units in electives and not in "core academic areas" were rejected, and the Governor subsequently vetoed the measure.

As noted in previous Commission discussions of diploma requirements, the transition period for the implementation of verified credits requires students graduating in 2004-2006 to have two verified units of credit in English (reading and writing) and four in any other areas; this "2 x 4" model might allow a student to use as many as four substitute tests--such as industry certifications--in the transition period. Upon full implementation of the verified units, the graduating classes of 2007 and thereafter will be required to earn verified units in specified courses.

The Southern Regional Education Board has rated the Commonwealth as among the nation's leaders in career and technical education efforts. Supporting career and technical education are High Schools That Work (HSTW), an initiative in place at 46 Virginia public schools. Evidencing a probable correlation between HSTW schools and strong SOL assessment performance are the recent accreditation performance data. Of these HSTW schools, eight would be fully accredited, 20 are provisionally accredited/meets state standards, 13 are provisionally accredited/needs improvement, and only five are accredited with a warning. Of these last five, four are new HSTW sites.

The need for adequate state and other funding for CTE equipment continues; while business partnerships may make available industry equipment and tools as well as internships, schools themselves need equipment on-site for student learning.<sup>10</sup>

### **Increasing Capacity for Teachers**

Consistent with its original study directive to "develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of ... teachers... to meet increasingly rigorous academic standards," the Commission examined two measures that the 2001 Session declined to pass. Both measures addressed teacher quality: one, through recruitment and retention incentives, and the other, through teacher preparation.

HB 2823 (Byron) would have established the Educators' Higher Education Opportunity Program, comprised of the voluntary contributions of educators employed on a full-time basis as licensed instructional or administrative personnel in good standing by a public school board in Virginia, to fund savings trust accounts pursuant to the Virginia College Savings Plan. The Board of Education would make an annual contribution to the Fund on behalf of eligible educators who have completed five years of full-time employment in a seven-year period. Savings trust account funds could not be disbursed prior to an eligible educator or designee being admitted and enrolled at an eligible institution. The Board, in consultation with the Board of the Virginia College Savings Plan, must establish regulations addressing (i) minimum amounts of educator contributions to the Fund; (ii) amounts of annual Board contributions to accounts in which the educator's interest has vested; (iii) changes in employing school boards; iv) the voluntary participation of local school boards in making contributions to the Fund on behalf of employees; and (v) such other matters as it deems necessary for the implementation of the Program. The program would expire on July 1, 2006. Prompting introduction of the measure were teacher recruitment and retention concerns; the Program would serve as an employment incentive, not unlike stock options and

---

<sup>10</sup>November 15, 2001, Meeting Summary.

corporate signing bonuses offered in private sector employment. Teachers and local school divisions, as well as the Commonwealth, would contribute to the Program.

Also examined was SJR 357 (Ticer), which would have requested the Joint Task Force on the K-12 Teaching Profession in Virginia, jointly established by the State Council for Higher Education (SCHEV) and the Board in fall, 2000, to "examine the staffing levels in the teacher education programs in the colleges and universities." Both SCHEV and the Department have databases recording various teacher education data, but these databases are not coded to address the concern's raised in SJR 357. The resolution had directed the Task Force to not only "determine the efficacy of increasing the faculties in such educational programs in order to admit additional students" but also to "consider, in this examination, accreditation requirements, funding limitations, institutional policies for salary and space allocation, the current student/faculty ratios, any increases or decreases in enrollment in such programs, and such other issues as it may deem appropriate."

In November, the Board and SCHEV were to receive recommendations regarding this issue. Commission discussion focused on the effect of early retirements and legislation allowing retirees to return to teaching while retaining retirement benefits, the potential shortage of teachers of education, and the need for a comprehensive approach to teacher reform. Connecticut was cited as a model in its teacher reform efforts, as it now experiences no shortages, high salaries, good student test scores, and increased demand for schools of education. Teachers are employed using term contracts. Re-thinking teacher preparation to reflect Board-identified competencies using alternative routes other than current coursework offered by higher education institutions also received Commission focus. Ways of recruiting current teachers to enter administrative positions were also cited.

According to a Board of Education survey, an estimated 50 percent of Virginia public school principals will retire in the next five years. Commission members cited the immediate need to prepare as well as retain school administrators. Options noted were cross-training, differentiated staffing, and "hybrid" contracts providing no benefits but offering administrative positions within the school personnel structure.<sup>11</sup>

### **III. REMEDIATION EFFORTS AND YEAR-ROUND SCHOOLS**

Directed to carry forward the work of the joint subcommittee on remediation, the Commission explored year-round school calendars and related remediation issues. The Commonwealth employs a twofold approval process for year-round public schools in Virginia. Pursuant to the SOA, individual schools, with local school board approval, may seek a waiver from the Board of Education for "experimental or innovative programs" that may not be consistent with the SOA. The request to the Board is to include the program's purpose, objectives, description, and duration; anticipated outcomes; evaluation procedures; numbers of students affected; and "mechanisms for measuring goals, objectives, and student academic achievement." (8 VAC 20-131-290 D). As the SOA define the standard school year as 180 days or 990 instructional hours (8 VAC 20-131-150), year-round schools typically must seek a waiver from this regulation.

---

<sup>11</sup>November 15, 2001, Meeting Summary.

The second part of the waiver process is a statutory one, imposed by § 22.1-79.1, requiring school boards to set school calendars to ensure that the first day of student attendance falls after Labor Day. The Board of Education may grant waivers from this requirement for "good cause," which includes, among other things, "experimental or innovative programs" approved by the Board pursuant to the SOA procedures.

From an initial six schools in two divisions in 1997, the number of schools offering a year-round initiative grew to 33 for the 2001-02 school year. Situated in 11 divisions, the majority of the initiatives are in elementary schools. The calendars typically use "45-15" schedule, providing 45 instructional days, followed by a 15-day break used as an "intersession" for remediation or enrichment opportunities. This year, schools seeking continuing approval for these year-round calendars will be required to submit evaluations of their programs to the Board.

**Schools Approved for Year-Round Calendar, 2001-02**

<b>Division</b>	<b>No. of schools</b>
Buena Vista	3 (all)
Danville	5
Fairfax Co.	6
Hampton	6
Henry Co.	1
Isle of Wight	1
Martinsville	1
Newport News	1
Norfolk	2
Suffolk	2
Virginia Beach	2

A preliminary review of school report cards for the 23 schools approved for year-round schedules in 2000-2001 indicates that one school improved its performance to fully accredited status and six improved to provisionally accredited/meets state standards. Of the 16 remaining schools, 14 were rated provisionally accredited and two were accredited with warning.

Using the 45-15 model, Hampton Public Schools' intersessions offer acceleration as well as remediation. Schools may operate on a single, year-round track, or offer a "dual track," necessitating special scheduling for school buses and other services. Teachers are offered the option to teach on the regular schedule or the intersessions. Daycare is offered at a charge onsite at some schools through the City of Hampton Division of Parks and Recreation; private daycare providers were approached by Hampton school leaders in the planning stages of these initiatives to ensure that services would be available for youngsters not participating in intersessions. The upcoming school year runs from July 30, 2001 through June 20, 2002.

Having broad support from parents, teachers, businesses, daycare, and the community, the Hampton school division focused on educating these constituents about the year-round initiative. Parents were surveyed to ascertain interest in the new model. In 1998,

the initiative was implemented at two elementary schools and one middle school. In 2000, an additional elementary school was added, and, in 2001, approval was granted for participation by three additional elementary schools.

Desiring opportunities for increased instructional time; improved student achievement, attendance, and learning retention; and broader options for students and parents, the school division also found that performance on the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments was a significant impetus for the year-round initiative. Adding 25 instructional days, with four to four and one-half hours per intersession day, the Hampton year-round schedule has yielded high student attendance (92-95 percent on non-intersession days), improved test scores, and high approval ratings from parents.

Similar findings emerged in the Danville Public School system, where five schools operate on the year-round calendar, with open enrollments provided. Identified as key elements in any year-round initiative were voluntary participation, instructional as well as calendar alignment, a single track, and academic focus. Expanded learning opportunities are available through Saturday and night school, intersessions, and extended day through after-school tutoring centers, staffed by division-trained volunteers and housed in 25 to 30 churches.

About 200 students participate in a year-round program in Danville. As in Hampton, the Danville intersessions offer remediation as well as enrichment. Sessions last for five hours. Since the implementation of the initiative, minority graduation rates have improved by about 14 percent, closing the gap with rates for nonminority students to seven percentage points. Schoolfield Elementary, with 70 percent of its students participating in free lunch programs and a 50 percent transient population, has witnessed great academic gains, moving from last in the division five years ago to a tie for first place in test scores. In addition, its SOL scores are above the division average. Follow-up studies of the year-round initiative indicate reduced student retention, decreasing disciplinary and special education referrals, and increasing cumulative academic benefits.

Teachers participating in intersessions are paid a summer school hourly wage of approximately \$20, rather than on an extended contract basis. The add-on costs for the 40 additional instructional days result in a \$10.53 per pupil per day cost; it was noted that the cost of retaining a student one academic year is approximately \$6,000.<sup>12</sup>

### **Effectiveness of Remediation**

Testimony from Dr. James H. McMillan, Professor of Educational Studies, Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC), Virginia Commonwealth University, indicated that challenges in research design for studies of remedial summer school initiatives are variations in program duration, student attendance, teacher training, continuity with regular school curriculum, parental involvement levels, and planning time. In addition, variations in measures of remediation success--such as grades or standardized tests--create challenges in assessing the effectiveness of remedial programs. Using a single

---

<sup>12</sup>August 7, 2001, meeting summary.

group pre-test and post-test design may not garner greater reliability, as extraneous events, poor attendance and attrition, misleading grade equivalency scores, and statistical regression to the mean--a phenomenon that occurs "simply because we don't have perfect measurement"--may undermine any strong conclusions that might be drawn. Also figuring into the analysis of program effectiveness is the "effect size" of any change in performance; using the Cohens *d*-Index, statisticians may factor in the standard deviation in comparing posttest and pretest scores to determine whether change in test scores following remediation is "statistically" significant and reflective of substantive change. An index of .33 or higher is deemed a "substantive difference."

### How Much Change Is Possible?

Dr. James McMillan, "Effectiveness of Summer Remediation Programs"

$$\text{Cohens } d\text{-Index} = \frac{\text{Post-test score} - \text{Pretest score}}{\text{Standard Deviation}}$$

Algebra I SOL Test Example:

$$d\text{-Index} = \frac{410 - 380}{44}$$

$$d\text{-Index} = .68$$

Effect	Scale Score Gain	Items
1.0	44	10
.5	22	5
.2	8	3

A review of 31 studies of the effect of summer school on the achievement of at-risk secondary students in 12 states indicated the same effects for gender. High school and elementary school students showed greater gains than did middle school students; students of middle- and high-socioeconomic status showed greater improvement. Also showing the greatest improvement were rural, suburban, and small communities.

Program characteristics contributing to effectiveness were focus on deficiencies; required rather than voluntary attendance; smaller class size; individualized, rather than group, instruction; parental involvement; licensed, rather than unlicensed, teachers; and collaborative planning. Greater gains are noted with 60 to 100 instructional hours, and math witnessed greater gains than English. Other recommendations for effective remediation included completing remediation close to the beginning of the subsequent school year; requiring formative and longitudinal evaluations; providing adequate teacher planning time; and ensuring local control to facilitate necessary adaptations.

The MERC summer remediation study will examine the progress of ninth graders failing one or more SOL assessments this past spring. The study will incorporate a pretest-posttest model for ninth grade students failing a spring 2001 SOL assessment required to attend summer school, and a pretest-posttest for a comparison group, where possible, for those ninth graders failing an SOL assessment who did not attend summer school.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>September 10, 2001 Meeting Summary.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Continuing its pursuit of a wide range of education reform issues in its third year of study, the Commission determined that ensuring educational accountability for Virginia's public schools remains a critical concern. The implementation of the Standards of Accreditation, the increasing demand for qualified instructional personnel, and the effective preparation of students to enter the workforce continue to merit Commission focus. The addressing needs of career and technical education students within the SOL assessment structure, the impact of the SOL assessments on those students who have not had the revised SOL curriculum throughout their public education, the alignment of curriculum with SOL assessments, adequacy of instructional materials, disaggregation of student scores, and other significant issues merit ongoing exploration and observation.

Therefore, the Commission has agreed upon the following recommendations:

*Recommendation 1: That the Board of Education, with the assistance of the Department of Education and the Accountability Advisory Committee, continue to examine the use of multiple criteria to supplement the Standards of Learning assessments for purposes of school accreditation, graduation requirements, and promotion/retention policies.*

*Recommendation 2: That the Commission on Educational Accountability be continued for one additional year.*

Respectfully submitted,  
SJR 385 Commission on Educational Accountability

\*\*\*

## Year 2001 Meetings of the SJR 385 Commission

### **June 18, 2001 ~ General Assembly Building, Richmond, Virginia**

Call to Order and introductions of members: Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr., *chairman*; Review of 2001 Session actions addressing accountability: "multiple criteria" and remediation bills: Kathleen G. Harris, Senior Attorney, Division of Legislative Services; Update on revisions to Standards of Accreditation and implementation of Standards of Learning; related topics: Representatives of Department of Education; Discussion of issues and workplan

### **August 7, 2001 ~ General Assembly Building, Richmond, Virginia**

Remediation/Intervention Focus--Year Round Schools: Charles Finley, *Assistant Superintendent for Accountability, Virginia Department of Education*; Hampton Public Schools: Dr. Allen L. Davis III, *Superintendent*; Dr. Rebecca Lett, *Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services*; Patricia Leary, *Principal, Merrimack Elementary School*; Mildred Sexton, *Principal, Spratley Middle School*; Danville Public Schools: Dr. N. Andrew Overstreet, *Superintendent*; Effective Practices in Virginia Schools: Educators' Perspectives of Practices Leading to Student Success on SOL Tests: Peter Hughes, *Director, Governor's Best Practice Center, Region IV, Virginia Department of Education*; Overview of SOL Test Security Procedures: Shelley Loving-Ryder, *Director of Assessment and Reporting, Virginia Department of Education*

### **September 10, 2001 ~ General Assembly Building, Richmond, Virginia**

Call to Order: Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr., *chairman*; Commonwealth Educational Poll--Standards of Learning: Dr. William C. Boshier, Jr., *Executive Director, Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University*; Effectiveness of Remedial Summer School Programs: Review of Literature and Annotated Bibliography--Dr. James H. McMillan, *Professor of Educational Studies, Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium (MERC), Virginia Commonwealth University*; Findings of the Academic Review Teams on Schools Accredited with Warning: Dr. Cheri C. Magill, *Director of Accreditation, Virginia Department of Education*; Virginia Scores on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): Kirk Schroder, *President, Virginia Board of Education*

### **November 15, 2001 ~ General Assembly Building, Richmond, Virginia**

Call to Order and introductions of members: Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr., *chairman*; Dr. Patricia I. Wright, *Assistant Superintendent for Instruction* and Lolita Hall, *Program Improvement Specialist, Career and Technical Education*, Responding to questions regarding the Department of Education Update on Developments in Career and Technical Education; Delegate Kathy Byron, *patron*, Review of HB 2823 (Educators' Higher Education Opportunity Program); Karl Schilling, *Deputy Director, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)*: Responding to questions regarding SJR 357 (Ticer), requesting the Joint Task Force on the K-12 Teaching Profession in Virginia established by SCHEV and the Board of Education to examine the staffing levels in the teacher education programs in the colleges and universities; Update from Kirk Schroder, Commission member and Board of Education President, regarding Board of Education response to HB 2163 (Standards of Accreditation and multiple criteria); HB 2122 (Graduation requirements); Work Session/working lunch: Review of multiple criteria issues; Development of recommendations.

E:\DLSDATA\HMNATRES\01 Studies\SJR 385\Report\2002report.doc



**HJR 723 SPECIAL TASK FORCE EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF THE STANDARDS  
OF ACCREDITATION ON LOCAL SCHOOL DIVISION BUDGETS**  
COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY (SJR 498)

**Invited Guest of Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC)-- Tuesday,  
November 20, 2001  
General Assembly Building, Richmond, Virginia**

**MEMBERS**

Delegate Flora D. Crittenden, *chairman*  
Delegate Mitchell Van Yahres  
Delegate James H. Dillard, II  
Delegate Phillip A. Hamilton  
Delegate Jack Reid  
Delegate Beverly J. Sherwood  
Senator William T. Bolling  
Senator Emmett W. Hanger, Jr.  
Senator Janet Howell  
Senator Yvonne B. Miller

**Staff**  
*Division of Legislative Services*  
Kathleen G. Harris, *Senior Attorney*  
Gwen Foley, *Senior Operations Staff Assistant*

*Office of the Clerk, Senate of Virginia*  
Patty Lung, *Committee Clerk*

Members of the HJR 723 Joint Subcommittee attended the November 20 meeting of Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission as invited guests to hear the presentation by Robert B. Rotz, Senior Division Chief, on the findings and recommendations of the JLARC Standards of Quality (SOQ) funding study. Following the presentation, members convened in the 4th floor East Conference Room for discussion and a question and answer period with Mr. Rotz.

Discussion focused on several JLARC findings, including those addressing the adequacy of the current Standards of Quality in light of prevailing school division practices, funding of teacher salaries using the linear weighted average, the constitutionally-mandated shared responsibility for funding the SOQ, and the use of locally-generated revenues in calculating the costs of providing SOQ programs.

"Hidden" costs in the Standards of Accreditation were also noted. Elementary school resource teachers in art, music and physical education are not included in the Standards of Quality; however, the SOA provide that "each [elementary] school shall provide instruction in art, music, and physical education and health." (8 VAC 20-131-80 A). While most school divisions employ elementary music, art, and physical education resource teachers to meet this requirement, this staffing is not cited in the SOQ and is therefore not included in the funding model.

In addition, the SOA require one class period daily for instructional planning time for full-time secondary school teachers and for middle school teachers with more than 25 class periods per week have one period per week (8 VAC 20-131-240 D, E), this concept is not addressed in the Standards of Quality staffing ratios. The JLARC study found that incorporating such a planning period would require funding for a 21:1 ratio, rather than the existing 25:1.

Pursuant to Article VIII, § 5 of the Virginia Constitution and § 22.1-18 of the Code of Virginia, the Board of Education is to annually report to the General Assembly regarding the

"condition and needs" of public education in the Commonwealth. In addition, the Board is to identify any school divisions and specific schools that have "failed to establish and maintain schools meeting the existing prescribed standards of quality." This practice has not been followed in recent years; however, the Board has recently indicated its plans to conduct a review of the SOQ "from time to time, but no less than once every two years."

Also discussed was the Commonwealth's practice of subtracting locally-generated revenues "from the top" in calculating the costs of providing an education program meeting the Standards of Quality. Gaps in funding of certain administrative personnel were also noted, as were constitutional concerns regarding the Commonwealth's responsibilities for the Standards of Quality and the apportionment of responsibilities to localities.

Possible modifications to the composite index of local ability-to-pay, reflecting population density (to address those areas that may have higher demand for other services due to higher density) as well as median income levels (to accommodate those divisions with only a few taxpayers with high incomes).

Task Force members agreed to seek local input regarding the JLARC report and to submit any potential recommendations to staff for collation and subsequent distribution to Task Force members. An additional meeting may then be scheduled to finalize any Task Force recommendations.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

### Study Objectives Addressed in First Year (1999)

	8/5	11/15	12/21	1/4	1/13	2000 DRAFT Wkplan
1. Review SOA and any included accountability mechanisms;	✓	✓	✓			I A
2. Monitor implementation of SOL, revised assessments;	✓		✓			I B
3. Consider the work/ recommendations of other recent studies: HJR 196--Future of Public Education (1996) HJR 572--Remediation (1999) HJR 670--Educational Infrastructure (1999) HJR 241--School Dropout Prevention (1996) HJR 165--School Incentive Reward Program (1996);	✓ in initial report					I C
4. Develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of schools, teachers, and students ...;	✓		✓			III B
5. Examine issues raised in SJR 344 (1999) regarding the effects on the Commonwealth's young people of failure to obtain a diploma pursuant to requirements of the SOA;						I D
6. Evaluate the efficacy, appropriateness, and application of the Commonwealth's statutes, regulations, and policies governing the academic assessment of transfer students (SJR 389—1999);		✓				I E
7. Determine the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a certificate of completion for certain vocational programs in public high schools (HJR 593—1999);						IV A(1)
8. Determine the efficacy and appropriateness of the Commonwealth's system of funding the Standards of Quality (SOQ) for public schools (HJR 657—1999);						II B
9. Study the instructional needs of students and teachers in the public schools of the Commonwealth (HJR 691—1999);						III D IV D
10. Examine impact of SOL and SOA on teachers, urban and small, rural school divisions, and educationally at-risk students, giving particular attention to the preparation of teachers and time to instruct students to meet the SOL, the ability of urban and small, rural school divisions to meet and maintain the requirements for accreditation, the effect of the SOL tests on grade promotion and retention of students and the awarding of high school diplomas, and the remediation of students who fail the SOL tests (HJR 721—1999);		✓	✓ (in part)		✓	IF (1) IF (2) IF (3) IF (4) III C IV C(1)
11. Confer with SJR 447 joint subcommittee regarding issues pertaining to overage students, adult students who are returning to school, and vo-tech education;						IV A(2)
12. Collaborate/receive reports of HJR 566 task force;				✓		IV A
13. Collaborate/receive reports of HJR 723 task force;				✓		II A
14. Collaborate with SJR 481 study of adjusting SOQ funding for certain small school divisions;				✓		II C
15. Confer and with other legislative study committees ... to avoid duplication; and	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	~
16. Consider such other issues as it deems appropriate.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	~

## Study Objectives Addressed in Second Year (2000)

	1999	9/12	9/25	11/21	1/8	Outline
1. Review SOA and any included accountability mechanisms;	✓	✓		✓		I A
2. Monitor implementation of SOL, revised assessments;	✓	✓		✓		I B
3. Consider the work/ recommendations of other recent studies: HJR 196--Future of Public Education (1996) HJR 572--Remediation (1999) HJR 670--Educational Infrastructure (1999) HJR 241--School Dropout Prevention (1996) HJR 165--School Incentive Reward Program (1996)	✓ in initial report					I C
4. Develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of schools, teachers, and students ...;	✓			✓	✓	III B
5. Examine issues raised in SJR 344 (1999) regarding the effects on the Commonwealth's young people of failure to obtain a diploma pursuant to requirements of the SOA;	—	✓		✓		I D
6. Evaluate the efficacy, appropriateness, and application of the Commonwealth's statutes, regulations, and policies governing the academic assessment of transfer students (SJR 389—1999);	—	✓		✓		I E
7. Determine the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a certificate of completion for certain vocational programs in public high schools (HJR 593—1999);	—	—	—	—	—	IV A(1)
8. Determine the efficacy and appropriateness of the Commonwealth's system of funding the Standards of Quality (SOQ) for public schools (HJR 657—1999);	—			✓		II B
9. Study the instructional needs of students and teachers in the public schools of the Commonwealth (HJR 691—1999);	—			✓		III D IV D
10. Examine impact of SOL and SOA on teachers, urban and small rural school divisions, and educationally at-risk students, giving particular attention to the preparation of teachers and time to instruct students to meet the SOL, the ability of urban and small rural school divisions to meet and maintain the requirements for accreditation, the effect of the SOL tests on grade promotion and retention of students and the awarding of high school diplomas, and the remediation of students who fail the SOL tests (HJR 721—1999);	—	✓		✓		IF (1) IF (2) IF (3) IF (4) III C IV C(1)
11. Confer with SJR 447 joint subcommittee regarding issues pertaining to overage students, adult students who are returning to school, and vo-tech education;	—	—	—	—	—	IV A(2)
12. Collaborate/receive reports of HJR 566 task force;	✓				✓	IV A
13. Collaborate/receive reports of HJR 723 task force;					✓	II A
13A. Collaborate/receive reports of HJR 302 task force (NEW)					✓	~
13B. Continue work of Remediation study ( HJR 302) (NEW)	✓			✓	✓	~
14. Collaborate with SJR 481--adjusting SOQ funding for certain small school divisions;	✓			✓		II C
15. Confer and with other legislative study committees...to avoid duplication;	✓					~
16. and Consider such other issues as it deems appropriate.	✓					~
<b>Teacher Shortage--Generally and Specifically *in background report</b>		✓	✓			
a. project number of classroom teachers needed in Virginia over the next 10 years;			✓ *			
b. review the teacher education process;			✓ *			
c. assess recruitment and retention efforts;			✓ *			
d. evaluate procedures for awarding continuing contracts, including how Virginia may retain the most capable teachers and replace teachers who do not meet the qualifications, standards, and expectations set for teachers;			✓ *			
e. consider the issues associated with compensation of teachers;			✓ *			
f. determine the adequacy of pre-service and in-service professional development of teachers; and			✓ *			
g. recommend ways to attract and retain an adequate supply of teachers in Virginia			✓			

## DRAFT Focus Areas ~ 2001

- As in previous years, the Commission's work in the year 2001 might organized within focus areas.
- Boxed-in areas denote those topics that might be combined or addressed at the same meeting.
- Shaded boxes denote the two new topics for 2001.
- In addition, several topics originally assigned to the full Commission might be appropriately addressed by an existing task force (see IV A (1), (2)).

### I. Educational Accountability Generally

- |    |   |             |
|----|---|-------------|
| A. | Additional review of SOA  | (1999--# 1) |
| B. | Additional review of SOL implementation   | (1999--# 2) |
| C. | Additional review of other study committees   | (1999--# 3) |
| D. | Effects of failure to obtain a diploma under SOA (SJR 344)                            | (1999--# 5) |
| E. | Additional review: assessment of transfer students (SJR 389)                          | (1999--# 6) |
| F. | Impact of SOA/SOL:  | (1999--#10) |
|    | 1. teachers; at-risk students   |             |
|    | 2. instructional time to meet SOL   |             |
|    | 3. ability of certain school divisions to meet and maintain accreditation             |             |
|    | 4. student promotion and retention; diploma requirements                              |             |
| G. | <b>2001 Session actions addressing accountability: Multiple Criteria bills (2001)</b> |             |

### II. Finance Issues

- |    |  |              |
|----|--|--------------|
| A. | HJR 723 Task Force: Impact of SOA on School Division Budgets | (1999--#13)  |
| B. | Efficacy of system of SOQ funding system (HJR 657)           | (1999-- # 8) |
| C. | Adjusting SOQ funding for certain school divisions (SJR 481) | (1999--#14)  |

### III. Increasing Capacity for Schools and Educators

- |    |   |                |
|----|---|----------------|
| A. | Teacher Shortage  | (2000 Session) |
| B. | Recommendations for Increasing Capacity   | (1999-- # 4)   |
| C. | Impact of SOL/SOA: Teacher Preparation  | (1999--# 10)   |
| D. | Instructional needs of teachers (HJR 691)   | (1999--# 9)    |
| E. | <b>HJB 2823 (Byron) Educators' Higher Education Opportunity Program (2001 letter)</b> |                |

### IV. Increasing Capacity for Students

- |    |  |              |
|----|--|--------------|
| A. | HJR 566: Vocational Education/Workforce Preparedness                           | (1999--#12)  |
|    | 1. Certificate of completion for vocational programs (HJR 593)                 | (1999-- # 7) |
|    | 2. Overage students, etc. (SJR 447)  | (1999--#11)  |
| B. | HJR 302: Alternative Assessments for Special Education Students (2000 Session) |              |
| C. | Remediation: Continuing work of remediation committee (HJR273)(2000 Session)   |              |
|    | 1. Impact of SOA/SOL: remediation  | (1999--#10)  |
| D. | Instructional needs of students (HJR 691)                                      | (1999-- # 9) |

\*\*\*

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 498**  
Establishing the Commission on Educational Accountability  
Agreed to by the Senate, February 27, 1999  
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 27, 1999

WHEREAS, described as a tripod whose three legs include clearly stated goals, information about progress toward them, and positive and negative consequences, accountability initiatives in public education are as varied and diverse as the states and school systems implementing them, and may include various "indicators" of pupil and teacher performance, revised evaluation and accreditation initiatives, or postgraduation tracking of students; and

WHEREAS, accountability initiatives may authorize state intervention in school operations and provide for financial incentives or penalties and other consequences; and

WHEREAS, the concept of educational accountability is not new to Virginia's public school system, as current constitutional and statutory provisions and regulations provide a plethora of mechanisms for the accountability of students, teachers, administrators, schools, and school divisions; and

WHEREAS, Virginia has made great progress in establishing educational accountability with the implementation of revised Standards of Learning for mathematics, English, science, and history and social science in 1995 and new Standards of Accreditation in 1997; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's renewed commitment to strengthening accountability in public education is also evidenced in the work of a number of recent legislative and executive branch study committees, including the Commission on Accountability for Educational Excellence, House Joint Resolution No. 168 (1996) and the Commission on the Future of Public Education, House Joint Resolution No. 196 (1996); and

WHEREAS, to increase accountability for public education in Virginia, it is imperative to build on those existing and revised standards, programs, and initiatives that ensure the greatest educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, school personnel, including teachers, school administrators, counselors, and instructional support staff, and parents should be active participants in the development of educational policies, and it is essential that school personnel and parents also share in the responsibility and accountability for achieving educational excellence; and

WHEREAS, further review of existing accountability initiatives addressing not only pupil performance but also instructional quality, school accreditation, safety and discipline, parental and community involvement, and administrative and fiscal issues is necessary to ensure continued progress in making our schools accountable for improved learning; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has been charged to address a myriad of issues related to and impacting the Standards of Quality, the Standards of Learning, and the Standards of Accreditation; and

WHEREAS, due to the complexity of the issues and the interaction of public policies affecting education, it is necessary that special task forces be established to assist the Commission in its work, and that the Commission collaborate and coordinate its work with other legislative study committees requested to examine related matters to avoid duplication; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Commission on Educational Accountability be established. The Commission shall be composed of 20 members, which shall include 11 legislative members, 6 nonlegislative members, and 3 ex officio members to be appointed as follows: 5 members of the Senate of whom two shall be appointed to serve on the special task force created pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 723 (1999), and one shall be appointed to serve on the special task force established pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 566 (1999), to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; 6 members of the House of Delegates, of whom two shall be appointed to serve on the special task force established pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 723 (1999), and two shall be appointed to serve on the special task force created pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 566 (1999), to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of Rule 16 of the Rules of the House of Delegates; one parent of a child who is enrolled in the public schools of the Commonwealth, one public school teacher, and one school principal, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; one division superintendent, one representative of the Virginia School Boards Association, and one citizen at-large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the Secretary of Education, the President of the Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall serve ex officio with full voting privileges.

The Commission shall (i) review the Standards of Accreditation and the accountability mechanisms included therein; (ii) monitor the implementation of the Standards of Learning and revised assessments; (iii) consider the work and

recommendations of other recent study committees, such as the Commission on the Future of Public Education, House Joint Resolution No. 196 (1996), the Joint Subcommittee on Remediation, House Joint Resolution No. 572 (1999), the Commission on Educational Infrastructure, House Joint Resolution No. 670 (1999), the Standing Joint Subcommittee on School Dropout Prevention, House Joint Resolution No. 241 (1996), and the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Efficacy and Appropriateness of Establishing a School Incentive Reward Program in the Commonwealth, House Joint Resolution No. 165 (1996); (iv) develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of schools, teachers, and students to meet increasingly rigorous academic standards; (v) examine issues raised in Senate Joint Resolution No. 344 (1999) regarding the effects on the Commonwealth's young people of failure to obtain a diploma pursuant to requirements of the Standards of Accreditation for Public Schools in Virginia; (vi) evaluate the efficacy, appropriateness, and application of the Commonwealth's statutes, regulations, and policies governing the academic assessment of students who transfer into Virginia's public schools, in accordance with Senate Joint Resolution No. 389 (1999); (vii) determine the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a certificate of completion for certain vocational programs in public high schools, pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 593 (1999); (viii) determine the efficacy and appropriateness of the Commonwealth's system of funding the Standards of Quality for public schools, pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 657 (1999); (ix) study the instructional needs of students and teachers in the public schools of the Commonwealth, pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 691 (1999); (x) examine the impact of the Standards of Learning and the Standards of Accreditation on teachers, urban and small rural school divisions, and educationally at-risk students, giving particular attention to the preparation of teachers and time to instruct students to meet the Standards of Learning, the ability of urban and small rural school divisions to meet and maintain the requirements for accreditation, the effect of the Standards of Learning tests on grade promotion and retention of students and the awarding of high school diplomas, and the remediation of students who fail the Standards of Learning tests, in accordance with House Joint Resolution No. 721 (1999); (xi) confer with the joint subcommittee established pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution No. 447 (1999), regarding issues pertaining to overage students, adult students who are returning to school, and vocational-technical education; (xii) collaborate, coordinate, and receive regular reports of the Commission's special task force established pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 566 (1999) studying the integration of the Standards of Learning with the secondary school level curricula and workforce development skills; (xiii) collaborate, coordinate, and receive regular reports of the Commission's special task force studying the impact of the Standards of Accreditation on local school division budgets, in accordance with House Joint Resolution No. 586 (1999) and House Joint Resolution No. 723 (1999); (xiv) collaborate and confer with the joint subcommittee established to examine the efficacy and appropriateness of adjusting Standards of Quality funding for certain small school divisions, pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution No. 481 (1999); (xv) confer and coordinate the work of the Commission with other legislative study committees which have been charged to examine related issues to avoid duplication; and (xvi) consider such other issues as it deems appropriate. The Commission shall endeavor to address the many issues raised by the aforementioned resolutions.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. The Department of Education, and the staffs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the House Committee on Appropriations shall provide technical assistance for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$21,500.

The Commission shall receive the interim reports of the special task forces by November 1, 2000, and include such reports in its interim report to the Governor and the 2000 Session of the General Assembly. The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its final findings and recommendations, including the final reports of the special task forces, to the Governor and the 2001 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

\*\*\*

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 385**

Continuing the Commission on Educational Accountability.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 22, 2001

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 21, 2001

WHEREAS, Senate Joint Resolution No. 498 established the Commission in 1999 to study educational accountability; and

WHEREAS, the Commission was directed to examine a plethora of issues, and was to review the Standards of Accreditation and the accountability mechanisms included therein as well as monitor the implementation of the Standards of Learning and assessments; and

WHEREAS, in meeting the directives of Senate Joint Resolution No. 498, the Commission was to consider the work and recommendations of other named education study committees and develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of schools, teachers, and students to meet increasingly rigorous academic standards; and

WHEREAS, also among the Commission's duties were an examination of the effects on the Commonwealth's young people of failure to obtain a diploma pursuant to requirements of the Standards of Accreditation for Public Schools in Virginia; an evaluation of the Commonwealth's statutes, regulations, and policies governing the academic assessment of students who transfer into Virginia's public schools; a determination of the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a certificate of completion for certain vocational programs in public high schools; and a study of the instructional needs of students and teachers in the public schools of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Commission was also to determine the efficacy and appropriateness of the Commonwealth's system of funding the Standards of Quality for public schools and to examine the effect of the Standards of Learning and the Standards of Accreditation on teachers, urban and small rural school divisions, and educationally at-risk students; and

WHEREAS, collaborating with the Commission in its multifaceted mission were three task forces, addressing issues as diverse as workforce needs of the 21st century (House Joint Resolution No. 566--1999), the fiscal impact of the Standards of Accreditation (House Joint Resolution No. 723--1999), and assessments for students in special education (House Joint Resolution No. 302--2000); and

WHEREAS, also assigned to the Commission by the 2000 Session of the General Assembly were the continuation of the work of the Joint Subcommittee on Remediation pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 302, and a study of the demand for and supply of classroom teachers pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 159 and Senate Joint Resolution No. 248; and

WHEREAS, with the adoption of final revisions to the Standards of Accreditation by the Board of Education in fall 2000, ongoing efforts to improve student performance on as well as the administration of the Standards of Learning assessments, and the phasing in of school accreditation requirements, the issue of educational accountability will continue to be a primary concern for legislators, educators, parents, and students; and

WHEREAS, another year of study will enable the Commission to pursue more fully its mission and to address more effectively the myriad of educational accountability issues assigned to it; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Commission on Educational Accountability be continued for one year. The Commission shall consist of 25 members, which shall include 14 legislative members, eight nonlegislative members, and three ex officio members to be appointed as follows: six members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; eight members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; one parent of a child who is enrolled in the public schools of the Commonwealth, one public school teacher, and one school principal, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; one division superintendent, one representative of the Virginia School Boards Association, and three citizens at large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the Secretary of Education, the President of the Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall serve ex officio with full voting privileges; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational Accountability to Study the Educational Needs of the 21st Century be continued. The special task force shall consist of 16 members, which shall include six legislative members, five nonlegislative members, and five ex officio members as follows: two members of the Senate, of whom one shall be a member of the Commission on Educational Accountability, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; four members of the House of Delegates, of whom two shall be members of the Commission on Educational Accountability, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; two citizens representing the business community and public education grades K-12, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; three



citizens representing public higher education and industry, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the Secretary of Education; the Secretary of Commerce and Trade; the Superintendent of Public Instruction; the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System; and the Director of the State Council of Higher Education, who shall serve ex officio with full voting privileges. The chairman and vice-chairman of the Special Task Force on the Educational Needs of the 21st Century shall be members of the Virginia General Assembly; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational Accountability to Examine the Impact of the Standards of Accreditation on Local School Division Budgets be continued. The special task force shall consist of 10 legislative members as follows: four members of the Senate, of whom two shall be members of the Commission on Educational Accountability, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; and six members of the House of Delegates, of whom three shall be members of the Commission on Educational Accountability to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational Accountability to Examine the Need for Appropriate Alternative Forms of Standards of Learning Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education and Related Services be continued. The special task force shall consist of 10 members of the Commission on Educational Accountability to be appointed as follows: four members to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections and six members to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates.

The Division of Legislative Services shall continue to provide staff support for the Commission and its special task forces.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.

The direct costs of the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational Accountability to Study the Educational Needs of the 21st Century shall not exceed \$6,000, representing three meetings during the 2001 legislative interim.

The direct costs of the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational Accountability to Examine the Impact of the Standards of Accreditation on Local School Division Budgets shall not exceed \$7,500, representing three meetings during the 2001 legislative interim.

The direct costs of the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational Accountability to Examine the Need for Appropriate Alternative Forms of Standards of Learning Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education and Related Services shall not exceed \$7,500, representing three meetings during the 2001 legislative interim.

The direct costs of Commission on Educational Accountability shall not exceed \$17,200, representing four meetings during the 2001 legislative interim.

The Commission on Educational Accountability and its task forces shall schedule their meetings consecutively on the same date, to the extent practicable, to conserve costs.

The total direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$38,200, representing the sum of the direct costs for the Commission and its task forces, during the 2001 legislative interim.

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its written findings and recommendations, including the reports of its task forces, by November 30, 2001, to the Governor and the 2002 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

\*\*\*

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

1 Continuing the Commission on Educational Accountability and its task forces.

2 WHEREAS, Senate Joint Resolution No. 498 established the Commission in 1999 to  
3 study educational accountability; and

4 WHEREAS, the Commission was directed to examine a plethora of issues, and was to  
5 review the Standards of Accreditation and the accountability mechanisms included therein as  
6 well as monitor the implementation of the Standards of Learning (SOL) and related  
7 assessments; and

8 WHEREAS, in meeting the directives of Senate Joint Resolution No. 498, the  
9 Commission was to consider the work and recommendations of other named education study  
10 committees and develop recommendations for ways to increase the capacity of schools,  
11 teachers, and students to meet increasingly rigorous academic standards; and

12 WHEREAS, assisting with the Commission in pursuing its multifaceted mission were  
13 three task forces, addressing issues as diverse as workforce needs of the 21st century (House  
14 Joint Resolution No. 566--1999), the fiscal impact of the Standards of Accreditation (House  
15 Joint Resolution No. 723--1999), and assessments for students in special education (House  
16 Joint Resolution No. 302--2000); and

17 WHEREAS, also assigned to the Commission by the 2000 Session of the General  
18 Assembly were the continuation of the work of the Joint Subcommittee on Remediation  
19 pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 302, and a study of the demand for and supply of  
20 classroom teachers pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 159 and Senate Joint Resolution  
21 No. 248; and

22 WHEREAS, acknowledging that "another year of study will enable the Commission to  
23 pursue more fully its mission and to address more effectively the myriad of educational  
24 accountability issues assigned to it," the 2001 Session of the General Assembly adopted SJR

1 385, thereby continuing for one year the work of the SJR 498 Commission on Educational  
2 Accountability and its three task forces; and

3 WHEREAS, figuring prominently in the Commission's work in 2001 were consideration  
4 of recent legislative actions addressing multiple criteria for school accreditation, graduation,  
5 and promotion and retention; the effectiveness of remediation efforts and year-round schools;  
6 test security procedures; the efforts of academic review teams in assisting schools accredited  
7 with warning; and recent developments in career and technical education; and

8 WHEREAS, with the adoption of final revisions to the Standards of Accreditation by the  
9 Board of Education in fall 2000, ongoing efforts to improve student performance on the SOL  
10 assessments, and the phasing in of school accreditation and diploma requirements, the issue  
11 of educational accountability will continue to be a primary concern for legislators, educators,  
12 parents, and students; and

13 WHEREAS, the increasing demand for qualified instructional personnel, the effective  
14 preparation of students to enter the workforce, the instructional needs of career and technical  
15 education students within the SOL assessment structure, and other significant issues merit  
16 ongoing exploration and observation; and

17 WHEREAS, another year of study will enable the Commission to pursue more fully its  
18 mission and to address more effectively the ongoing concerns regarding educational  
19 accountability in the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Commission  
21 on Educational Accountability and its task forces be continued for one year. The Commission  
22 shall consist of 25 members, which shall include 14 legislative members, eight nonlegislative  
23 members, and three ex officio members to be appointed as follows: six members of the  
24 Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; eight members  
25 of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with  
26 the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates;  
27 one parent of a child who is enrolled in the public schools of the Commonwealth, one public

1 school teacher, and one school principal, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on  
2 Privileges and Elections; one division superintendent, one representative of the Virginia School  
3 Boards Association, and three citizens at large, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House;  
4 and the Secretary of Education, the President of the Board of Education, and the  
5 Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall serve ex officio with full voting privileges; and,  
6 be it

7       RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Special Task Force of the Commission on  
8 Educational Accountability to Study the Educational Needs of the 21st Century be continued.  
9 The special task force shall consist of 16 members, which shall include six legislative  
10 members, five nonlegislative members, and five ex officio members as follows: two members  
11 of the Senate, of whom one shall be a member of the Commission on Educational  
12 Accountability, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; four  
13 members of the House of Delegates, of whom two shall be members of the Commission on  
14 Educational Accountability, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with  
15 the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates;  
16 two citizens representing the business community and public education grades K-12, to be  
17 appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; three citizens representing  
18 public higher education and industry, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the  
19 Secretary of Education; the Secretary of Commerce and Trade; the Superintendent of Public  
20 Instruction; the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System; and the Director of the  
21 State Council of Higher Education, who shall serve ex officio with full voting privileges. The  
22 chairman and vice-chairman of the Special Task Force on the Educational Needs of the 21st  
23 Century shall be members of the Virginia General Assembly; and, be it

24       RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Special Task Force of the Commission on  
25 Educational Accountability to Examine the Impact of the Standards of Accreditation on Local  
26 School Division Budgets be continued. The special task force shall consist of 10 legislative  
27 members as follows: four members of the Senate, of whom two shall be members of the

1 Commission on Educational Accountability, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on  
2 Privileges and Elections; and six members of the House of Delegates, of whom three shall be  
3 members of the Commission on Educational Accountability to be appointed by the Speaker of  
4 the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the  
5 Rules of the House of Delegates; and, be it

6       RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational  
7 Accountability to Examine the Need for Appropriate Alternative Forms of Standards of  
8 Learning Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education and Related Services be  
9 continued. The special task force shall consist of 10 members of the Commission on  
10 Educational Accountability to be appointed as follows: four members to be appointed by the  
11 Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections and six members to be appointed by the  
12 Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation  
13 contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates.

14       The Division of Legislative Services shall continue to provide staff support for the  
15 Commission and its special task forces.

16       All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission, upon  
17 request.

18       The direct costs of the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational  
19 Accountability to Study the Educational Needs of the 21st Century shall not exceed \$6,000,  
20 representing three meetings during the 2002 legislative interim.

21       The direct costs of the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational  
22 Accountability to Examine the Impact of the Standards of Accreditation on Local School  
23 Division Budgets shall not exceed \$7,500, representing three meetings during the 2002  
24 legislative interim.

25       The direct costs of the Special Task Force of the Commission on Educational  
26 Accountability to Examine the Need for Appropriate Alternative Forms of Standards of

1 Learning Assessments for Students Receiving Special Education and Related Services shall  
2 not exceed \$7,500, representing three meetings during the 2002 legislative interim.

3 The direct costs of Commission on Educational Accountability shall not exceed \$17,200,  
4 representing four meetings during the 2002 legislative interim.

5 The Commission on Educational Accountability and its task forces shall schedule their  
6 meetings consecutively on the same date, to the extent practicable, to conserve costs.

7 The total direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$38,200, representing the sum of the  
8 direct costs for the Commission and its task forces, during the 2002 legislative interim.

9 The Commission shall complete its work by November 30, 2002, and shall submit its  
10 written findings and recommendations, including the reports of its task forces, to the Governor  
11 and the 2003 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division  
12 of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

13 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by  
14 the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for  
15 the conduct of the study.

16 #