



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Commission on Youth

Senator Yvonne B. Miller, *Chair*
Delegate Christopher K. Peace, *Vice Chair*

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January 12, 2009

TO: The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine, Governor of Virginia
and Members of the General Assembly

Pursuant to the provisions of the Code of Virginia (§§ 30-174 and 30-175) establishing the Virginia Commission on Youth and setting forth its purpose, I have the honor of submitting herewith the Executive Summary for the calendar year ending December 31, 2009.

This 2009 Executive Summary includes the interim activity and work conducted by the Virginia Commission on Youth during the 2009 study year, as required by § 30-175.

Final reports of the studies conducted will be published or made available on the General Assembly website. These reports will also be available on the Commission's website, <http://coy.state.va.us>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Yvonne B. Miller".

Yvonne B. Miller
Chair

2009 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF

**THE VIRGINIA COMMISSION
ON YOUTH**



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

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2009**



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Sincerely,

Yvonne B. Miller
Chair

2009
VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

Senate of Virginia

The Honorable Yvonne B. Miller, Chair
The Honorable Harry B. Blevins
The Honorable R. Edward Houck

House of Delegates

The Honorable Christopher K. Peace, Vice Chair
The Honorable Mamyé E. BaCote
The Honorable Robert H. Brink
The Honorable Mark L. Cole
The Honorable Beverly J. Sherwood

Citizen Members

Ms. Joy Myers
Mr. Anthony Dale
Marvin H. Wagner



2009

VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

Executive Director

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Senior Legislative Policy Analyst

Leah Hamaker

Executive Assistant

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Access to the Internet

The Commission on Youth's homepage is located at
<http://coy.state.va.us>

Acknowledgments

The Virginia Commission on Youth extends its sincere appreciation to the Office of the Clerk of the Senate, the Office of the Clerk of the House, the Division of Legislative Services, and the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for their assistance and support throughout 2009.

Legislative Initiative

Truancy and School Dropout Prevention

Study Author

Virginia Commission on Youth

Enabling Authority

§ 30-174 and § 30-175

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2008 General Assembly Session, Delegate Franklin P. Hall introduced House Bill 1263, which required local school boards to implement school dropout prevention programs and services which emphasize truancy prevention. The bill would also amend the Code to address compliance with the compulsory school attendance law to strengthen the authority of local school boards. Members of the House Education Committee reviewed the bill and determined that further study of these issues would be appropriate. The Committee forwarded a letter from Delegate Hall requesting the Commission on Youth, in conjunction with the Department of Education, to study the provisions set forth in House Bill 1263.

At the Commission on Youth's April 23, 2008 meeting, the Commission adopted a two-year study plan for truancy and dropout prevention. The Commission revised the second year study activities at the May 29, 2009 meeting to include the following:

- Reconvene the Truancy and Dropout Prevention Advisory Group and invite representatives from the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Virginia State Crime Commission.
- Meet with selected school division representatives.
- Meet with judicial representatives.
- Conduct extensive background and literature reviews on other states' initiatives and policies and national studies of dropout prevention.
- Review federal legislation/statutes, including the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2008, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), proposed rule modifying graduation rate formula and other initiatives impacting schools.
- Review Virginia laws, including truancy and compulsory education, Child in Need of Supervision (CHINSup), juvenile confidentiality statutes.
- Interview impacted stakeholders.
- Analyze Virginia practices.
- Review cohort dropout data by school division.
- Synthesize findings of statutory review and workgroup recommendations.
- Solicit feedback to recommendations from constituents and Department of Education.
- Solicit feedback from Virginia State Crime Commission.
- Refine findings and recommendations and present findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth.

At its December 7, 2009 meeting, the Commission on Youth approved the following recommendations from the second year of the study:

TRUANCY

Recommendation 1

Support the Department of Education efforts in the development of a definition for truancy and request that the Department of Education provide an update to the Commission on Youth on the status of efforts to address truancy prior to the 2011 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 2

Request that the Department of Education provide an update on the development of regulations for reporting of student absences and associated attendance policies. Such an update will occur prior to the 2011 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 3

Request the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, Virginia School Board Association, Virginia Alternative Educators Association, Virginia PTA/PTSA, Virginia School Counselors Association, the Virginia Education Association and the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards include information on effective programs which reduce truancy of elementary school-aged youth at their annual conferences and trainings.

Recommendation 4

Request the Virginia PTA/PTSO work with its membership and parents of elementary school students to establish approaches, including the development of business partnerships, which are helpful in conveying to parents the benefits of school attendance at the elementary school level.

Recommendation 5

Encourage school divisions to include in all of their truancy prevention programs evidence-based practices for early intervention at the elementary level, with focus on effective school engagement, the establishment of community partnerships and methods to engage students and parents in the school community.

Recommendation 6

Encourage school divisions to develop mechanisms, such as Student Assistance Programming, for identifying students who may need additional school or community supports and direct them and their families to the appropriate services.

Recommendation 7

Encourage that stakeholder organizations contact Virginia's Congressional Delegation to request that the State Grants portion of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSCA) be reinstated in the federal budget.

Recommendation 8

Request that the Department of Juvenile Justice and Department of Criminal Justice Services include in future trainings clarification on information-sharing between school resource officers, court service units and law enforcement.

Recommendation 9

Encourage the Department of Juvenile Justice to establish guidelines for court service units on how best to expedite resolution of truancy matters when presented to court service units and to include expectations for court diversion programs truancy cases.

Recommendation 10

Amend Section 22.1-258 of the *Code of Virginia* to give more flexibility to local school divisions by consistently stating that “the school principal, his designee or the attendance officer” is responsible for notifying the parent; making direct contact with the parent; and developing a student’s attendance plan.

Recommendation 11

Request the School Board Association to work with local school boards and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents to encourage them to review their current practices and policies related to attendance and that they share effective attendance practice and policies.

SCHOOL DROPOUT PREVENTION

Recommendation 1

Support alternative education opportunities for students who have been long-term suspended or expelled.

Recommendation 2

Encourage cross-district collaboration to expand alternative education options for students.

Recommendation 3

Support distant and virtual learning programs for remediation efforts or credit recovery that adhere to the provisions of the Virginia Board of Education’s *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*.

Recommendation 4

Support paid career or on-the-job training opportunities for high school students which allow students to earn credits for their participation.

Recommendation 5

Support the maintenance and record keeping of those students who are long-term suspended or expelled who are referred to alternative education placements in order to track their success in completing the requirements for graduation.

Recommendation 6

Request the Governor’s Office of Substance Abuse Prevention to collaborate across multiple agencies, including the possibility of a university collaboration, for the purpose of developing a website dedicated to prevention and intervention, as well as school dropout prevention and intervention.

Recommendation 9

Request the Virginia PTA and Virginia Education Association develop parent support materials that could be used to help educate parents about dropout risk factors, early indicators, prevention strategies, and available community resources.

Recommendation 10

Encourage districts/regions to establish volunteer parent support groups.

Recommendation 11

Request that Virginia’s Parent Resource Centers include information on their websites and in mailings on the factors that place children at-risk of dropping out of school and the options which might be available to help reduce that risk.

Recommendation 12

Request the Department of Education brief the Commission on Youth in the summer of 2010 on its work in addressing truancy and school dropout prevention, to include changes addressed in the Board's *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* and other technical assistance efforts identified by the Department.

Recommendation 13

Encourage on-going professional development to include training on dropout prevention. Training could include early indicators of dropout risk, techniques for developing protective factors in children, classroom and behavior management, and best practices in dropout prevention.

Recommendation 14

Encourage school divisions to provide more cross-training between educators and agencies involved in youth and family services, including agencies that support families in crisis.

Recommendation 15

Encourage school divisions to consider the implementation of evidence-based programs that provide training for classroom and behavior management and that help staff know how to identify and serve students most at-risk of dropping out of school.

Recommendation 16

Encourage school divisions to consider the implementation of student assistance programming which provide wraparound services to students in need.

Recommendation 17

Direct the Commission on Youth to include in its final report on the Study of Truancy and Dropout Prevention information on the Department of Education's actions in 2009 to inform school divisions of 140-hour seat rule.

Legislative Initiative

Career and Technical Education

Study Author

Virginia Commission on Youth

Enabling Authority

§ 30-174 and § 30-175

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Commission's meeting on May 29, 2009, the Commission adopted a study plan for career and technical education which directed staff to conduct a gap analysis of career and technical education programs in the Commonwealth in order to determine whether the existing career and technical education structure currently meets the needs of students and Virginia communities and identify whether resources or system improvements may be needed. The outcome would determine whether resources or system improvements may be needed.

The approved study plan included the following activities:

- Federal statutory review
 - Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins)
 - Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
 - The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)
- State statutory review
 - Standards of Learning (SOL)
 - Standards of Accreditation (SOA)
- Analyze of Virginia practices and CTE programs
 - Obtain CTE student and teacher information
 - Review delivery system/school information
 - Review facility and equipment needs
 - Determine funding for CTE, both federal and state funds
 - Outline administration of CTE
 - Review CTE standards and quality control
 - Review CTE incentives
 - Review Virginia's Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Initiatives (STEM)
 - Monitor Board of Education's Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education
 - Assess CTE partnerships with business, industry and local governments
 - Assess Secondary and Post Secondary Linkages
- Conduct site visits of regional and local CTE programs
 - Regional Career and Technical Centers
 - Governor's Career and Technical Academies
 - Local CTE programs
- Convene regional Career and Technical Education Roundtables throughout the Commonwealth to receive feedback on the existing career and technical education system as well as any suggestions for enhancement or improvement.
 - Convene Roundtables in Southwestern Virginia, the Piedmont Region, Central Virginia, Tidewater and Northern Virginia to ensure the various regions of the Commonwealth are represented.
 - Invite legislators, government officials, industry leaders, business officials, education representatives and other impacted stakeholders.
- Conduct extensive background and literature reviews.
 - Other states' CTE initiatives and policies
 - National Governor's Association study on CTE
- Conduct interviews with students and parents
- Convene Work Group to assist in study effort.

Invite representatives from the groups identified below:

Secretary of Education	Business representatives
Superintendent of Public Instruction	Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Parent Representatives	Virginia Community College system
Virginia Alternative Educators Association	Virginia Workforce Council
Associated General Contractors of Virginia	<i>Jobs for Virginia Graduates</i> program
Industry representatives	CTE Educators/Administrators
Virginia Manufacturers Association	Local School Division Representatives

- Develop recommendations and present them to the Commission on Youth.

In conducting the study, the Commission partnered with State Farm Insurance to convene eight Regional Roundtables with over 200 business and industry, major corporations, small business owners, community colleges, local government, parents school, community and business leaders throughout the Commonwealth. Its first roundtable discussion was in Roanoke in May; the second, September 21 at the Hanover County Center for Trades and Technology in Mechanicsville. Additional roundtables have been held in Northern Virginia (September 30), Tidewater (October 2), Massanutten (October 20), Galax (November 10), Henry County (November 11), and Abingdon (November 30). Included as a part of several roundtables was a tour of the host career and technical education center. Commission staff also met with impacted business organizations and stakeholders, including representatives of the Virginia Association for CTE and the Virginia Associated Builders and Contractors Incorporated, as well as various industry and business representatives. In addition, staff met with representatives from the Virginia Community College System and Virginia Department of Education.

At its December 7, 2009 meeting, the Commission on Youth approved the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

Support the Department of Education and the Board of Education's Career Advisory Committee's plans to work with local Career and Technical Education advisory committees to continue to educate the business community about the benefits of industry certifications, including National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI).

Recommendation 2

Request the Secretary of Education and the Virginia Career Pathways System Working Group identify those credentials and certificates valued by Virginia employers and are appropriate for inclusion in Virginia's CTE Pathways. Regional variation in demand and program offerings will be acknowledged in this review. A report on the status of this review will be submitted to the Virginia Commission on Youth, the Board of Education and the Council on Career and Technical Education prior to the 2011 General Assembly Session.

Recommendation 3

Introduce a resolution to support the update of Virginia's Workplace Readiness Skills (WRS) and test revision. Request that the status of the update to the WRS, and its accompanying assessment instrument, be shared by the Department of Education with Virginia's network of Career and Technical Education (CTE) administrators and school counselors during all upcoming conferences and trainings. Also, encourage local school divisions to communicate regularly with and invite the participation of the local employer community about workplace readiness initiatives and results from student testing on this and other credentialing tests.

Recommendation 4

Request the Virginia Community College System, the Virginia Workforce Council and the Department of Education include the Career Readiness Certification (CRC) with the Academic and Career Plans for Career and Technical Education Pathways, as appropriate.

Recommendation 5

Support the Board of Education's Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee's efforts to advocate and market CTE.

Recommendation 6

Support the Department of Education revisions to the *R U Ready Parent's Guide* and request that it be shared with parents of 7th grade, rather than 8th grade, students and request that the Department consider making the *R U Ready Guide for Students*, which provides information about students' educational opportunities, available to high school students in their sophomore, rather than junior, year.

Recommendation 7

Request that the Virginia Association of School Counselors Association and Virginia PTA/PTSO include information on Virginia's rising labor force needs, as well as the benefits of Virginia's Career and Technical Education programs, in all trainings, newsletters and appropriate media. Also request that this message be shared with parents of kindergarteners.

Recommendation 8

Support the Virginia Workforce Investment Council and the local workforce boards' work with local school divisions to communicate the value of Virginia's Career and Technical Education programs.

Recommendation 9

Request the Department of Education include in the training materials for Academic and Career Plans, as well as in the sample plan:

- a. the value of work-based learning for students, such as cooperative education, internships, job shadowing, mentorships, projects, service learning or a combination;
- b. the value of skilled occupations for students; and
- c. information for students and parents regarding the importance of having an industry credential or certification.

Recommendation 10

Support the Department of Education's efforts to promote private-public partnerships which offer real-world experiences to students. These partnerships include, but are not limited to: 4-H, Ag in the Classroom and Junior Achievement.

Recommendation 11

Support the Governor's Career and Technical Academies in Virginia as programs designed to expand options for the general student population to acquire Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

Recommendation 12

Request the Virginia Broadcasters Association to develop a public service campaign to inform the public of the benefits and value of career and technical education.

Recommendation 13

Request the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) provide guidelines on the requirements for credentials Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructors need to satisfy the requirements to teach courses qualified for dual enrollment credit. Request that, once these guidelines are completed by VCCS, they be shared with the Department of Education and the Board of Education's Advisory Council for CTE, Virginia CTE Resource Center and Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education (VACTE).

Recommendation 14

Request the Secretary of Education provide an update to the Commission on Youth on the progress of developing a template for statewide articulation agreements for Career and Technical Education as recommended in House Document 33 (2005, HJR 125) and to provide a report addressing the feasibility of establishing a unified agreement of dual enrollment in the Commonwealth, the barriers of pursuing uniform implementation of dual enrollment, and the costs of standardizing dual enrollment offerings. (Adopted)

Recommendation 15

Support the Department of Education's efforts to address the shortage of Career and Technical Education teachers in the Commonwealth.

Recommendation 16

Support the efforts of the Board of Education's Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education (efforts to address teacher shortages, including teacher recruitment and the involvement of local CTE advisory committees).

Recommendation 17

Support the continuation and expansion of Virginia Community College System (VCCS) Career Coaches program and request the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals and the Virginia School Board Association include information on the effectiveness of the Virginia Career Coach Program in upcoming conferences and trainings, as appropriate.

Recommendation 18

Support the Department of Education and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) plan to integrate and implement the Academic and Career Plan (ACP) with the Virginia Education Wizard.

Recommendation 19

Support the Department of Education's efforts to provide information in upcoming training and training materials on Virginia's Career Coaches, including ways Career Coaches can assist in the implementation of the Academic and Career Plan (ACP) and school divisions may establish partnerships with the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and parents to support the Career Coaches.

Recommendation 20

Request the Board of Education's State Special Education Advisory Committee address barriers to appropriate placements of students with special needs into Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by developing (or sharing) written guidelines for use by school personnel.

Legislative Initiative

Update of *Collection of Evidence-based Treatments for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Disorders*

Study Author

Virginia Commission on Youth

Enabling Authority

§ 30-174 and § 30-175

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2002 General Assembly, through Senate Joint Resolution 99, directed the Virginia Commission on Youth to coordinate the collection of empirically-based information on treatments recognized as effective for children, including juvenile offenders, with mental health treatment needs. The resulting publication entitled *Collection of Evidence-based Treatments for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs* was compiled by the Commission on Youth with the assistance of an advisory group of experts pursuant to the resolution. The *Collection* was published in *House Document 9* and presented to the Governor and the 2003 General Assembly.

The 2003 General Assembly passed Senate Joint Resolution 358, which required the Commission to update the *Collection* biennially. The Commission on Youth designed this initiative to be assisted by an advisory group, which was to provide overall guidance, including direction and philosophy for the update of the *Collection*. The *Collection 2nd Edition* was published in *Senate Document 10* and presented to the Governor and the 2005 General Assembly.

Senate Joint Resolution 358 also mandated that the Commission disseminate the *Collection* via web technologies. As specified in the resolution, the Commission received assistance in disseminating the *Collection* from the Advisory Group, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Public Safety.

At its May 7, 2009 meeting, the Commission on Youth approved the following study plan:

- Re-convene the Advisory Group to determine the scope of the collection efforts for the next biennial update.
- Pursue partnering with state agencies, universities and organizations to enhance the content of the *Collection* for the next biennial update.
- Review other states' initiatives regarding the utilization and dissemination of evidence-based practices in the field of children's mental health.
- Partner with Office of Comprehensive Services and Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services on initiatives pertaining to service creation and service array management.
- Identify goals, strategies and mechanisms for continued dissemination of the *Collection*.
- Identify additional partners and participants in biennial update and training initiatives.
- Present findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth.

In Spring 2010, the Commission on Youth, in partnership with the School of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University, will publish the 4th Edition of the updated *Collection*. This third biennial update summarizes current research on mental health treatments that have been proven to be effective in treating children and adolescents and provides an updated listing of evidence-based treatments. Participating in the updating process was an Advisory Group of experts from the private and public sectors. The *Collection* may be accessed on the Reports Section on the Commission on Youth's website - <http://coy.state.va.us>.

At its December 7, 2009 meeting, the Commission on Youth approved the following:

CONTINUATION OF STATEWIDE DISSEMINATION EFFORTS

Recommendation 1

By letter, request all agencies in the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources, the Secretariat of Public Safety and the Secretariat of Education, post the *Collection, 4th Edition* to their respective web sites to cost-effectively and efficiently facilitate access to this information.

Recommendation 2

By letter, contact behavioral health providers as well as local juvenile justice officials to inform them of the *Collection, 4th Edition* and how it may be accessed. Such contact will be via the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards and the State and Local Advisory Team, through the State Executive Council, and through the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Recommendation 3

By letter, request that the Children's Services System Transformation include on their website, and in any appropriate conferences and trainings, information on the *Collection 4th Edition* as well as how it may be accessed.

Recommendation 4

By letter, request that the Intensive Care Coordinator Network, through the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Children's Services System Transformation, include information on the *Collection, 4th Edition* and how it can be accessed.

Recommendation 5

By letter, request that the SJR 358 Advisory Group assist with the dissemination of the *Collection, 4th Edition*, as well as how it can be accessed.

Recommendation 6

By letter, request that impacted provider associations, such as the Virginia Coalition of Private Provider Associations, the Virginia Medical Society, the Psychiatric Society of Virginia, the Virginia Academy of Pediatrics and other appropriate professional associations, inform their members of the *Collection, 4th Edition*, as well as how such information may be accessed.

Recommendation 7

By letter, request that family advocacy organizations and consumer groups, including the Virginia Federation of Families be informed of the *Collection, 4th Edition* as well as how such information may be accessed so they may share it with their membership.

ENCOURAGING THE USE OF EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENTS

Recommendation 8

By letter, request that the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Education, and the Department of Criminal Justice Services continue to encourage the use of proven practices for child and adolescent behavioral health and developmental services in the programming and development of any future projects.

Recommendation 9

By letter, request the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Office of Comprehensive Services, and other impacted agencies, include information regarding proven practices for child and adolescent behavioral health and developmental services, including juvenile offenders, in any workforce development efforts, such as conferences or training, as applicable.

SCHOOL-BASED DISSEMINATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENTS

Recommendation 10

By letter, request that the Department of Education inform school divisions of the *Collection, 4th Edition* so that it may be utilized by guidance offices, school nurses, school-based health offices, school special education services and parent organizations.

INCLUSION OF BEST PRACTICES IN UNDERGRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE CURRICULA

Recommendation 11

By letter, contact each of the Commonwealth's post-graduate programs in psychology, psychiatry, social work and counseling and encourage them to utilize the *Collection, 4th Edition* and provide course offerings which are consistent.

Recommendation 12

By letter, contact the Virginia Secretary of Education, the Virginia State Council of Higher Education, the Virginia Community College System the Council of Southwestern Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to encourage the evaluation of existing course-offerings to ensure that they are in line with what is needed in the field and include information on proven practices in child and adolescent behavioral health and developmental services in all curricula, practicum's and internships.

FUTURE BIENNIAL UPDATES

Recommendation 13

Include in the Commission's workplan for the *Collection, 5th Edition* approaches which encourage the utilization of proven practices in child and adolescent behavioral health and developmental services and encourages the individualization of treatments based on the strengths and needs of the client.

Recommendation 14

Include in the Commission's workplan for the *Collection, 5th Edition* discussion whether using proven practices in child and adolescent behavioral health and developmental services should be mandatory, evaluating the pros and cons of differential reimbursement and assessing instances when the Commonwealth reimburses for treatments that are not proven to be effective. All capacity and funding issues relating to these topics will also be addressed in this review. The Commission will request to brief the Senate Finance and House Appropriation Committees on the relevant costs and funding issues related to evidence-based treatments.