

2016 INTERIM

**Report of the Joint Committee to
Study the Future of Public
Elementary and Secondary
Education in the Commonwealth
(HJ112, 2016; SJ85, 2016)**

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



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**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
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Report of the Joint Committee to Study the Future of Public Elementary and Secondary Education in the Commonwealth 2016

Members

The Honorable R. Steven Landes, Chairman.
The Honorable Stephen D. Newman, Vice Chairman.
The Honorable Lamont Bagby.
The Honorable Richard P. Bell.
The Honorable Richard H. Black.
The Honorable John A. Cosgrove Jr.
The Honorable L. Mark Dudenhefer.
The Honorable Thomas A. Greason.
The Honorable Barbara A. Favola.
The Honorable Daun S. Hester.
The Honorable Mamie E. Locke.
The Honorable Roxann L. Robinson.
The Honorable David R. Suetterlein.

Staff:

Ryan Brimmer, Staff Attorney, Division of Legislative Services.
Thomas Stevens, Staff Attorney, Division of Legislative Services.
Scott Maddrea, House Committee Operations.

OVERVIEW:

The Joint Committee to Study the Future of Public Elementary and Secondary Education in the Commonwealth (the Committee) met twice during the 2016 interim to study (i) the need for revisions to or reorganization of the standards of quality with a particular emphasis on the effective use of educational technology, (ii) emerging education issues in the Commonwealth, and (iii) the future of public elementary and secondary education in the Commonwealth and make legislative recommendations, as necessary. The chairman also established and appointed legislative and nonlegislative citizen members to three subcommittees: (a) virtual learning and educational technology; (b) school leadership and student outcomes; and (c) revisions to the Standards of Accreditation, Standards of Learning, and Standards of Quality. Each subcommittee also met twice during the 2016 interim.

MEEETINGS:

July 21, 2016:

The Committee held its first meeting of the 2016 interim on Thursday, July 21, 2016 in House Room D in the General Assembly Building. A quorum was present.

After Committee staff delivered a brief overview of the duties of the Committee and the history of the Standards of Quality, Board of Education President presented to the Committee an overview of the Standards of Quality from the Board of Education's perspective, emphasizing the need for the Board of Education and the General Assembly to share the responsibility to ensure that a high quality system of public education is established and continually maintained. Dr. Steve Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Department of Education, then presented to the Committee an overview of educational technology and virtual learning in the Commonwealth. Dr. Staples highlighted some ongoing, innovative initiatives in this area such as a math outreach pilot program whereby a greater number of students are able to take virtual courses like Algebra I for which there are otherwise critical teacher shortages throughout the Commonwealth.

October 24, 2016:

The Committee held its second and final meeting of the 2016 interim on Monday October 24, 2016 in House Room D in the General Assembly Building. A quorum was present.

The Committee heard presentations from two virtual learning and educational technology providers in the Commonwealth. First, the Committee heard from Suzanne Sloane, Head of School at the Virginia Virtual Academy, a full-time virtual school serving students throughout the Commonwealth. Ms. Sloane walked the Committee through the rigorous state approval process for a school such as Virginia Virtual Academy; the unique programs, services, and educational experience that the school offers; and the strong academic outcomes for enrolled students. Next, Jacob Gibson and Loraine Lange presented to the Committee on behalf of PowerSchool, a for-profit education technology platform based in Roanoke, Virginia, an overview of PowerSchool's Virginia Instructional Improvement System product. The Virginia

Instructional Improvement System is an easy-to-use education information management system that empowers teachers and administrators to use data to drive improvements to instruction and student performance. Through a contract with the Virginia Department of Education, PowerSchool was able to offer this product to school divisions throughout the Commonwealth. Demand for the product was higher than anticipated - 127 of 132 school divisions took advantage of the Virginia Instructional Improvement System - and that led to a budget shortfall which PowerSchool absorbed on its own. Mr. Gibson and Ms. Lange noted that they look forward to further discussion of opportunities to partner with the Commonwealth to provide funding to sustain further growth in the use of this valuable tool.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee did not issue any formal findings or recommendations during the 2016 interim, opting instead to continue its in-depth study during the 2017 interim and to issue legislative recommendations in advance of the 2018 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Access to additional Committee resources is available on the Committee's website:

http://dls.virginia.gov/interim_studies_PublicEdu.html

