

# Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) Meeting

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

1:00-2:30PM



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# Agenda

Welcome

Introductions

Opening Remarks

Committee Purpose, Role, Term

Historical Framework for Draft  
Recommendations for Virtual Education Draft  
Regulations

Presentations & Timeline

Next Steps



Pursuant to the 2021 Appropriation Act language - SB7001 and meeting by electronic means set forth in subsection C of § 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia.



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# Zoom Protocols & Public Comment

To avoid feedback we will keep our microphones muted until speaking.

Committee members may use the raise hand feature to get the facilitators' attention.

Committee members are invited to post questions or comments in the chat box.

If you are using the phone, use \*6 to mute and unmute and \*9 to raise your hand.

Public viewing on the VDOE YouTube channel may email questions/comments to the mailbox until **October 8th**:  
[virtualprograms@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:virtualprograms@doe.virginia.gov).

The session is being recorded.



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# Introductions

Virginia Board of Education

Division Superintendents

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA)

Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS)

WHRO Public Media

Virtual Virginia (VVA)

Virtual Education Regulations Workgroup



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## Virginia Board of Education and Department of Education

Dr. Keisha Anderson, Board of Education

Dr. James Lane, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Mr. Michael Bolling, Assistant Superintendent for Dept. of Learning & Innovation

Dr. Leslie Sale, Director of Policy

Mr. James Chapman, Regulatory & Legal Coordinator

Dr. Brendon Albon, Director of STEM & Innovation

Dr. Meg Foley, Coordinator of Virtual Learning

Mr. Reggie Fox, Virtual Learning Specialist



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# Division Superintendents

Dr. Mervin B. Daugherty, Region I, Chesterfield County Schools (Mr. Ernest Longworth)

Dr. Jeffrey Smith, Region II, Hampton City Schools

Dr. Bernard Trey Davis, Region III, Richmond County Public Schools

Dr. Kevin Newman, Region IV, Manassas City Public Schools (Mr. Dave Lyon)

Dr. Garrett Smith, Region V, Staunton Public Schools (Mr. Tom Lundquist)

Ms. Jeanette Day Warwick, Region VI, Craig County Schools

Dr. Kevin Siers, Region VII, Pulaski County Public Schools (Mr. Lincoln Whitaker)

Mr. Robbie W. Mason, Region VIII, Charlotte County Public Schools (Ms. Karen Osborne)



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# Organizations & Agencies

Mr. Rodney Jordan, Virginia School Boards Association

Dr. Ben Kiser, Executive Director  
Virginia Association of School Superintendents

Mr. Bert Schmidt, President & Chief Executive Officer, WHRO  
Mitzi Fehl-Seward, Vice President of Digital Learning, WHRO

Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director, Virtual VA



# Virtual Education Regulations Workgroup

## VDOE

Mr. Michael Bolling, Assistant Superintendent Department of Learning & Innovation

Dr. Brendon Albon, Director Office of STEM & Innovation

Dr. Meg Foley, Coordinator of Virtual Learning

Mr. Reggie Fox, Virtual Learning Specialist





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# Workgroup Members

Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director, Virtual VA

Dr. Tina Manglicmot, Assistant Superintendent, Newport News Public Schools

Dr. Ashley Ellis, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Loudoun County Schools

Dr. Herbert Monroe, Assistant Superintendent, Caroline County Schools

Dr. Lesley Hughes, Chief Learning Officer, Henrico County Public Schools

Mr. Ernest Longworth, Director of Instructional Innovation, Chesterfield County Schools

Ms. Susan Patrick, Executive Director, Aurora Institute

Mr. Fred Jones, Policy Director, Aurora Institute

Dr. M'hammed Abdous, Director Center for Learning, Old Dominion University (ODU)

Ms. Carolyn Sykora, Senior Director of Standards, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) *(past member Mr. Ji Soo Song, Senior Policy Advisor)*

Dr. Karen Richardson, Executive Director, Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE)

Ms. Christine Bali, Regional Sales Director, Edgenuity

Mr. Dave Edwards, Powerschool



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# Superintendent of Public Instruction

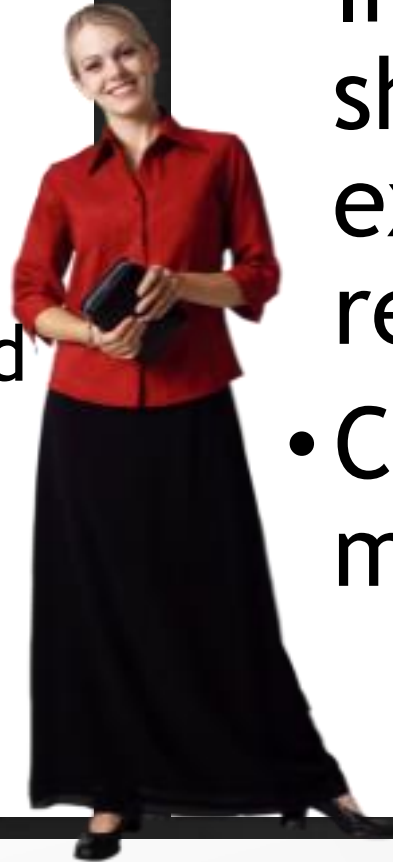
## Remarks

## Dr. James F. Lane



# Purpose, Role & Term

- Advisory group: online courses, in-service training and digital instructional resources necessary for school divisions to meet graduation requirements.
- Strategic planning to expand blended and online learning opportunities in Virginia public schools, training, content and digital resources.



- Important role sharing experience, expertise & resources
- Commitment to meet twice annually



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# Framework of Draft Recommendations for Virtual Education Regulations



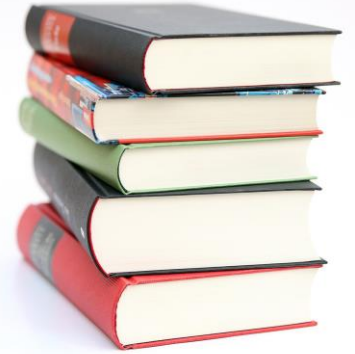
# Background

- Impact of COVID-19 & Virtual Learning
- Expansion of virtual learning
- Expansion of virtual education programs and continuing evolution
- Proposed 2013 Amendments to the *Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, 8 VAC 20-131, Standards of Accreditation
- June 17, 2021 - NOIRA on Virtual Education
- Posted on Virginia Regulatory Town Hall for public comments
- Formed Virtual Education Regulations Workgroup
- Reviewed various state regulations and policies related to virtual education



# Supporting documents

- *2013 Proposed Virtual Schools Regulations as a reference*
- *Standards of Quality*
- *Standards of Accreditation*
  - § 22.1-253.13:2. *Standard 2. Instructional, administrative, and support personnel*
  - *VDOE website Standards of Accreditation*
  - *SOA Staffing Requirements*
- *Research from Education Commission of the States (ECS)*
- *Research from Aurora Institute*





## Virtual Education in Virginia: A Collection of Supports and Resources (Superintendent's Memo #244-21)

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has released a new document to support school divisions in implementing successful virtual learning programs.

The document shares helpful information on topics including policy development, administration, technology requirements, virtual instruction, professional learning, and resources.

### VIRTUAL EDUCATION IN VIRGINIA



A COLLECTION OF SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES



## Class Size/Teacher Load & Staffing

- *Elementary*
- *Middle*
- *High*
- *Teacher Load - secondary (150)*
- *Staffing*
- *Equity & Student Services*

## Instructional Time

- *Calendar*
- *Instructional hours*
- *Standard Units of Credit*
- *Standard School Day & Seat time Equivalent*
- *Attendance*

## Data, Reporting & Operational

- *Enrollment*
- *Accountability & Testing*
- *Recordkeeping*
- *Technology & Support*
- *Extracurricular*





# Virtual Learning Definitions

Virtual Education - A virtual program or school offering part-time or full-time virtual learning opportunities.

Virtual Course - A course that takes place over the Internet, with the assigned teacher and student separated geographically, using a virtual instructional delivery system.

Virtual Program - Organizations that work directly with students and deliver virtual learning services, but are not “schools.” Virtual programs in Virginia include Virtual Virginia and other school division initiatives.

Virtual School - Organizations that work directly with students and deliver virtual learning services as a separate school within a division or region.

Virtual Teacher - A teacher of record, instructing learning experiences in an online, virtual environment in which time and space separates teachers and learners.



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# Presentations from Sub-groups

Draft Recommendations for Virtual Education Regulations

# Recommendations Regarding Class Size/Teacher Load, Staffing, Equity & Student Services

Sub-group 1



## Recommendations Regarding Class Size/Teacher Load, Staffing, Equity & Student Services

### Class Size/Teacher Load

Local School Boards and Public virtual programs or schools shall ensure that ratios of students to instructional, administrative, and support personnel are consistent with the *Code of Virginia* (§ 22.1-253.13:2(C-I)).

#### Elementary (K-5)

- In grades Kindergarten through 3, class sizes shall be limited to 24 students.
- In grades 4 and 5, class sizes shall be limited to 25 students.
- If a teacher teaches multiple sections of a particular subject, then their class size average of those classes should not exceed 25.
- If teacher only teaches elective/specials/etc. courses then their ratio shall follow the code (ratio one teacher per 1000 students - § 22.1-253.13:2(C-I)).

#### Middle (6-8) and High (9-12)

- Total teacher load shall not exceed a ratio of 150 to 1. Each period shall not exceed 30 students (except for English, where teachers' class size average of those classes should not exceed 24).



# Recommendations Regarding Class Size/Teacher Load, Staffing, Equity & Student Services

## Staffing

- All teachers of record need to be licensed to teach in Virginia Public School, and teaching in the area of endorsement. Non-licensed field experts may teach as an adjunct in coordination with a teacher of record.
- Public virtual programs or schools shall employ an instructional technology resource teacher to serve 1:54 educators in each elementary school and 1:57 educators in each secondary school.
- Public virtual programs or schools shall provide all instructional, administrative, and support personnel with high-quality professional development programs each year in virtual instructional strategies and practices.



## Recommendations Regarding Class Size/Teacher Load, Staffing, Equity & Student Services

### Equity & Student Services

Virtual programs should ensure representation of diverse experiences and perspectives including, but not limited to racial, ethnic, language, religions, and gender groups and inclusion of content that represents, validates, and affirms diverse groups from different rings of culture. Students shall not be excluded from participating in courses provided by virtual programs.

- Virtual programs must comply with all federal and state laws governing the education of all public school students. The responsible school division is required to provide services and counseling for special populations, students with disabilities, English Learners, gifted students, minority students, and/or economically disadvantaged students, in the virtual learning setting as in a brick and mortar setting.
- Written documentation to support compliance includes evidence that no students are excluded based on services required for special populations and evidence that materials used in courses are in accessible digital formats for use by assistive technology devices or programs and that content is Sharable Content Object Reference.

# Questions

Class Size/Teacher Load  
& Staffing



# Instructional Time

Sub-group 2





# Instructional Time

## *Calendar*

The virtual education program or school shall develop a calendar and post publicly. The calendar must:

- define term periods (e.g., grading period, semester, school year);
- indicate length of term period allowing a student to complete required coursework within the program/school calendar term;
- define cohort model indicating start and end dates within dates based on school division start and end dates; and
- indicate holidays.



# Instructional Time

## *Standard Units of Credit*

Divisions shall establish a local policy for waiving the 140-clock hour requirement for awarding of credit for students in a virtual education setting, consistent with the Board of Education's Guidelines for Graduation Requirements: Local Alternative Paths to Standard Units of Credit (Alternatives to the 140-Clock-hour Requirement).



# Instructional Time

## *School Day & Seat time Equivalent*

School divisions with a virtual education program or school shall establish a seat time equivalent in the virtual education program or school. Seat time equivalent may be based on percentage of minutes of instruction, time logged in, performance on assessments, competency achievement, demonstration of skills, building academic knowledge, or other factors.



# Instructional Time

## *Attendance*

The virtual education program or school shall establish methods to track student attendance through time on task, assignment completion, personal interaction and communication, and other appropriate means.

The virtual education program or school shall establish truancy intervention procedures based on student progress on standards, competencies, skill development.

# Questions

Instructional Time



# Data, Reporting & Operational

Sub-group 3



# Data, Reporting & Operational

## Enrollment and Matriculation

Public school divisions shall develop and provide all policies and procedures unique to enrollment and matriculation in the ***public virtual education setting*** to parents prior to enrollment and post such information for the public on the school division's website.

Policies and procedures unique to virtual learning shall include, but are limited to the following:

- Procedures and policies for application and acceptance;
- Student and Parent/Guardian Orientation materials;
- Support for 504, IEP, EL, and other student services (School Counselors, Librarians, ITRT et. al.);
- Technology Support policies;
- Support for Gifted and Talented services;
- Procedures for identifying potential learning environments for students and supporting the transition *to and from* F2F and virtual education settings;
- Grading policies - definitions of student success, intervention strategies and processes, tools for success; and
- Attendance (2013): Public school divisions with virtual programs should develop policies and procedures regarding the monitoring of student attendance, notification of parents and students regarding attendance issues and related disciplinary actions, and maintenance of records of attendance and this information shall be provided to parents prior to enrollment.



# Data, Reporting & Operational

## Assessment and Testing

Students enrolled in a *public virtual education setting* shall be required to take all applicable Virginia assessments, diagnostics, and screeners in a secure, controlled and proctored environment under the supervision of licensed personnel employed by a local school division or the public virtual school provider and trained in administering the tests.

- Information regarding student accountability and assessment shall be provided to the parents/guardians prior to enrollment.
- Students learning in virtual education settings should be tested similarly to their F2F peers per the local school division testing schedule.
- Students should complete assessments in-person when possible.
- Policies and procedures must ensure that each student shall be assessed annually to determine what remediation and other support structures are needed to help the student achieve academic success. *(re 2013 Revised Page 28: Accountability and Assessment prior to Enrollment)*
- As determined by the school division, traditional and non-traditional assessments, such as state assessments and portfolios, may be used as part of this annual assessment process.





# Data, Reporting & Operational

## Accountability and Assessment Communication

Information regarding student accountability and assessment shall be provided to the parents prior to enrollment. Public virtual schools shall develop policies and procedures to ensure that each student shall be assessed annually to determine what remediation and other support structures are needed to help the student achieve academic success. As determined by the school division, traditional and non-traditional assessments, such as state assessments and portfolios, may be used as part of this annual assessment process.



# Data, Reporting & Operational

## Recordkeeping

Schools shall maintain the same student records for students enrolled in the virtual school that they maintain for students in a traditional or face to face environment. All of the records, reports, and other information maintained by the public virtual school related to these documents, student scholastic records, and any other record or document maintained by the public virtual school shall be made available as may be necessary to the school board, superintendent, and school board employees.



# Data, Reporting & Operational

## Technology and Support

A public virtual school or public school offering a *virtual education setting* shall have a digital technology infrastructure that provides secure and appropriate access to the virtual learning environment.

Required infrastructure shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- secure and appropriate access to the virtual learning environment;
- a learning management system to support instruction;
- communication tools that facilitate synchronous and asynchronous discussion;
- support for collaboration among learners and teachers;
- support for the collection, management, and reporting of data on learning outcomes; and
- reliable technological support for families and students.



# Data, Reporting & Operational

## Extracurricular

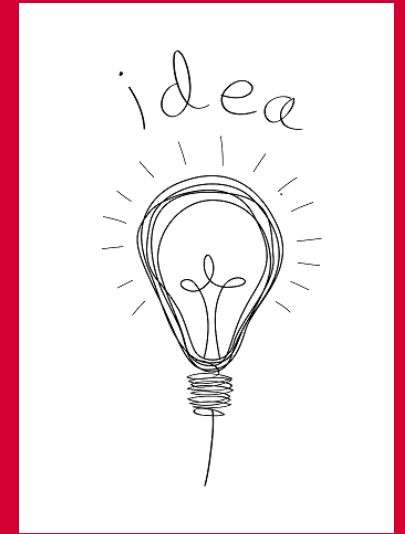
Extracurricular activities and eligibility requirements for students in virtual education settings shall be established in alignment with state policy and approved by the superintendent and the school board. An online learning student may participate in the extracurricular activities of the enrolling school division.

# Questions

Data, Reporting &  
Operational



# Are there additional topics that should be added to the proposed recommendations?



- Funding for full-time virtual students (portion of ADM)
- Specialized training; microcredentials
- Virtual teacher evaluation
- Additional considerations?



# Proposed Timeline



- ❑ *June 2021: NOIRA (Notice of Intended Regulatory Action) for approved legislative process*
- ❑ *June 2021: Sub-groups meet - additional research and discussion of group topics; add any notes to shared group documents*
- ❑ *July 2021: Whole workgroup meeting - share updates on developments from sub-groups*
- ❑ *August 2021: Sub-groups meet; draft proposed language*
- ❑ *September 2021: Whole workgroup meeting; present recommendations to VLAC for review and feedback*
- ❑ *October-December 2021: Continued work and revisions*
- ❑ *January 2022: Provide Report to the Board of Education*
- ❑ *March 2022: Proposed 1<sup>st</sup> Reading Board of Education*

# Stay safe!

- ✓ Next steps
- ✓ Next meeting  
(March 2022)
- ✓ Public viewing on the VDOE  
YouTube channel may email  
questions/comments to the  
mailbox until **October 8<sup>th</sup>**:  
[virtualprograms@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:virtualprograms@doe.virginia.gov).



## Thank you for your work on this advisory committee

