# MINUTES COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

# April 21, 2022

The Board of Education met at the Board Room, 22nd Floor, James Monroe Building, 101 North 14th Street, Richmond, VA 23219, with the following members present:

Dr. Tammy Mann, Vice President Dr. Keisha Anderson

Dr. Francisco Durán Ms. Anne Holton

Dr. Pamela Davis-Vaught Mrs. Jillian Balow,

Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dr. Mann called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and welcomed Board members, staff and visitors to the meeting. Dr. Mann noted that she approved Dr. Davis-Vaught’s participation in the meeting via electronic means due to a medical matter in accordance with § 2.2-3708.2 of the *Code of Virginia* and the Bylaws of the Virginia Board of Education.

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

Dr. Mann asked for a moment of silence.

***PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE***

The recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance followed the moment of silence.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Durán made a motion to adopt the March 16-17, 2022, meeting minutes of the Board as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Davis-Vaught and carried unanimously. Copies of the minutes were distributed in advance of the meeting.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

* Dr. Alan Seibert, Constituent Services and Government Relations Officer for Roanoke City Public Schools, spoke in support of Item-J related to flexibility for the chronic absenteeism indicator for school accreditation.
* Kandise Lucas spoke about concerns related to IEP and special education services and school divisions not complying with Senate Bill 1288 and House Bill 2299.
* Nancy DiFranco spoke on concerns with information being distributed to schools from the Virginia Department of Health.
* Narissa Rahaman, Executive Director of Equality Virginia, spoke in support of the VDOE *Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*.
* Wendy Kersey spoke in support of the VDOE *Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools* and asked the Board to support students and teachers and safety for the community.
* Michelle Williams spoke about concerns with Chesterfield County Public Schools providing the appropriate supports and services for her child.
* Melissa Siddiqi spoke about concerns with Chesterfield County Public Schools providing the appropriate supports and services for her child and altering student records.

## CONSENT AGENDA

## A. Final Review to Certify a List of Qualified Persons for the Office of Division Superintendent of Schools

## B. Final Review of Quarterly Literary Fund Report

## C. Final Review of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure’s Recommendation for a Passing Score for the Praxis® Reading Specialist (5302) Test

## D. Final Review of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure’s Recommendation for a Passing Score for the Praxis® Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205) Test

## E. Final Review of Amendments to the Licensure Regulations for School Personnel to Comport with American Sign Language National Certifications (Fast-Track Action)

Dr. Durán made a motion to approve items A through E on the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. Anderson and carried unanimously.

Dr. Anderson made a motion to approve the alternative accreditation plans in item F, with the exception of Arlington Community High School in Arlington County. The motion was seconded by Ms. Holton and carried unanimously.

Ms. Holton made a motion to approve the alternative accreditation plan for Arlington Community High School in Arlington County. The motion was seconded by Dr. Anderson. Dr. Durán abstained, and the motion carried.

## ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

**G. Final Review of Data Science Standards of Learning and Data Science Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework**

Tina Mazzacane, Mathematics Coordinator, presented this item to the Board for final review. She was joined by Dr. Brendon Albon, Director of the STEM and Innovation.

On November 18, 2021, the Board received the proposed Data Science Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework for first review.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) accepted public feedback on the proposed *Data Science Standards of Learning* through email and electronic submission from December 17, 2021 through January 31, 2022. Additionally, the Board held two virtual public hearings on January 11th and 20th, 2022. During this public comment period, the VDOE received input from parents, educators, representatives from business and industry, and other community members.

The VDOE also convened a virtual review meeting on February 7, 2022 with educators from state institutes of higher education, state mathematics organizations and business and industry representatives to review and seek feedback regarding the Proposed Data Science Standards of Learning.

The proposed Data Science Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework include revisions based on feedback collected since the Board’s first review in November. VDOE staff, in collaboration with Data Science Standards of Learning lead developers, reviewed the comments and feedback collected and made edits to the Data Science Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework.

Edits were made to the documents to

* provide clarity and consistency in language;
* to specify and expound upon the application of statistics and mathematics; and
* to focus more on data bias versus ethics.

The Data Science Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework will support school divisions in offering a rigorous high school mathematics course in Data Science which will provide students with an option to earn a half credit in mathematics (by taking a one-semester class) or full year credit in mathematics toward graduation starting in 2022-2023.

Mathematics Standards of Learning focused on Data Science do not currently exist in Virginia and these standards will expand mathematics learning opportunities and support stronger data literacy skills for students.

The VDOE will accept applications from school divisions across the Commonwealth to participate in a Pilot Implementation of the Data Science Standards of Learning and Curriculum Framework during the 2022-2023 school year.

Teachers participating in the pilot will receive initial professional learning in June 2022 and be asked to participate in a cohort of teachers implementing the standards. Data will be collected to measure the effectiveness of the pilot and target ways to improve instructional resources designed for use during the pilot.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board approve the proposed Data Science Standards of Learning, the proposed Data Science Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework and implementation of a pilot during the 2022-2023 school year.

Dr. Durán asked for clarification on the division representation for the pilot program. He suggested that it include rural, suburban, and urban divisions. Ms. Mazzacane responded that there will be a cross-representation of divisions in the pilot program.

Dr. Durán made a motion to approve the proposed Data Science Standards of Learning, the proposed Data Science Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework and implementation of a pilot during the 2022-2023 school year. The motion was seconded by Ms. Holton and carried unanimously.

**H. Final Review of Exempt Action to Align the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia with Chapter 552 of the 2020 Acts of the Assembly**

Mr. Jim Chapman, Regulatory and Legal Coordinator, presented this item to the Board for final review.

Chapter 552 of the 2020 Acts of the Assembly amended § 22.1-79.1 of the *Code of Virginia* to standardize the minimum instructional time requirement across grades K–12. Whereas kindergarten previously required a minimum of 540 hours of instructional time, Chapter 552 requires a minimum of 990 hours of instructional time.

Chapter 552 included a delayed enactment clause such that the amendments would become effective on July 1, 2022, and further required that the Board adopt regulations establishing standards for accreditation that include a requirement that the standard school day for students in kindergarten average at least 5.5 instructional hours in order to qualify for full accreditation.

In order to comply with Chapter 552, the Board must make minor edits to 8VAC20-131-80 C and 8VAC20-131-150 A and B of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* in order to include kindergarten in the minimum requirement of 990 hours of instructional time.

This action is an exempt action because the Board is not exercising discretion in carrying out the requirements of Chapter 552 and because the shortened regulatory process that attends the exempt action will allow for the Board to meet the deadlines as required.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board waive first review and approve the exempt action to align the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* with Chapter 552 of the 2020 Acts of the Assembly.

Dr. Anderson made a motion to waive first review and approve the exempt action. The motion was seconded by Dr. Davis-Vaught and carried unanimously

**I. Final Review of Fast-Track Action to Align the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia with Chapter 26 of the 2021 Acts of the Assembly**

Mr. Jim Chapman, Regulatory and Legal Coordinator, presented this item to the Board for final review.

Chapter 26 of the 2021 Acts of the Assembly amended § 22.1-137.2 of the *Code of Virginia* to require that every public school conduct a lock-down drill at least once during the first 20 days of each school session. Section 22.1-137.2 previously required that public schools conduct lock-down drills at least twice during the first 20 days of each school session.

Chapter 26 requires the Board to amend 8VAC20-131-260 B 3 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*. The proposed amendment will make the regulatory requirement more durable by stating that lock-down drills must be conducted in accordance with the statute instead of citing specific requirements.

This action is presented as a fast-track regulatory action. The action is expected to be noncontroversial because it is the result of a legislative mandate. Additionally, the Board is not exercising discretion in making the required changes.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board waive first review and approve the Fast-Track Action to align the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* with Chapter 26 of the 2021 Acts of the Assembly.

Ms. Holton made a motion to waive first review and approve the exempt action. The motion was seconded by Dr. Anderson, and carried unanimously.

**J. First Review of a Proposal to Adopt Special Provisions Regarding the Use of the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator for Accreditation Year 2022-2023**

Ms. Amy Siepka, Director of Accountability, presented this item to the Board on first review.

Chronic absenteeism is one of nine indicators in Virginia’s School Accreditation Model. Based in part on the relationship between school attendance and student achievement, chronic absenteeism was selected as a measure of student engagement in the 2017 revision to the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA). Chronically absent students are defined as those who are absent 10% or more of their enrolled school days, typically 18 or more days. The performance level a school earns on the chronic absenteeism indicator is used in conjunction with the performance levels of the other indicators to determine a school’s accreditation status.

Schools can earn one of three performance levels for an indicator: Level One (at or above the state benchmark); Level Two (near the state benchmark) and Level Three (well below the state benchmark). If all indicators receive a Level One or Level Two performance level, the school is *Accredited*. If one or more indicators receive a Level Three performance level, the school is *Accredited with Conditions*.

The Chronic Absenteeism rate, used to determine a performance level, is calculated by dividing the number of students who are absent 10% or more days by all students whose end-of-year membership is greater than or equal to 50%. Excused and unexcused absences are counted in the rate.

Due to the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, school division leaders have reported increased absenteeism in schools during school year 2021-2022 due to recommended quarantine guidelines for “close-contacts,” isolation guidelines for those with illness, and students being kept at home because of symptoms that could not be easily distinguished from COVID-19.

Under normal circumstances, school divisions have control of the programs, school-level policies, processes, and practices they put in place to engage students in school. However, student absences due to COVID-19 were not necessarily a result of the lack of school-level policies and procedures put in place to engage students and curb absenteeism, and as such, the chronic absenteeism data for 2021-2022 may not accurately reflect school efforts to engage students.

In August 2021, guidance was sent to school divisions through Superintendent’s Memo #230-21. While these guidelines were communicated in August 2021, they may not have been implemented with fidelity across the state due to staffing shortages, numbers of students being quarantined at one time, lack of reliable internet connectivity, and/or lack of understanding of the flexibilities afforded to schools. In addition, due to this unprecedented situation, student records may not accurately represent the status of students who were indeed absent or receiving remote instruction.

Because of the circumstances surrounding chronic absenteeism in 2021-2022, the Board can exercise its authority under 8VAC20-131-380 F3 of the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (SOA) to adopt special provisions related to the use of a school quality indicator in determining the accreditation status of schools.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board waive first review and approve the special provision that removes the chronic absenteeism indicator from the determination of school accreditation status for 2022-2023 only. In doing so, the earned performance level and chronic absenteeism rate will still be assigned to, and reported for schools, according to provisions in the SOA. Data will be available to school divisions as they prepare for the 2022-2023 school year, and will be available publicly to ensure transparency to all stakeholders in the community.

Ms. Holton noted appreciation to staff for bringing this action forward but emphasized that this is one-time flexibility and does not indicate a larger change about the Board’s commitment to maintaining the chronic absenteeism indicator. Superintendent Balow echoed Ms. Holton’s comments.

Dr. Durán asked for clarification on the baseline year for comparison when this indicator comes back online next year. Ms. Siepka responded that staff has not had a chance to discuss and decide the baseline year yet since accreditation has been waived for the past two years.

Dr. Durán clarified that the Board’s vote is to waive the use of the chronic absenteeism indicator for the 2022-2023 accreditation year but is not acting on setting a new baseline year for comparison.

Dr. Durán made a motion to waive first review and approve the special provision that removes the chronic absenteeism indicator from the determination of school accreditation status for 2022-2023 only, so long as a performance level and rate are still assigned to the school according to provisions in the Standards of Accreditation, and are reported publicly. The motion was seconded by Dr. Davis-Vaught, and carried unanimously.

**K. First Review of Guidelines for Practice Year 2 of the Early Childhood Unified Measurement and Improvement System (VQB5)**

Ms. Jenna Conway, Deputy Superintendent for Early Childhood Care and Education, presented this item to the Board on first review.

The *Code* directed the Board to establish a unified quality rating and improvement system for all publicly funded birth-to-five providers as of July 1, 2021. In June 2021, the Board fulfilled this expectation by approving the *Guidelines for Practice Year 1 of the Unified Measurement and Improvement System*, which has since been formally named VQB5. The *Code* further requires that this system will expand over time, with all publicly-funded providers required to participate in VQB5 starting in the fall of 2023.

VQB5 is implemented through two practice years which provide every publicly-funded birth-to-five program (school-based preschool, Head Start/Early Head Start, and child care subsidy participating child care and family day home) the opportunity to practice being measured before results are shared publicly. 2021-2022 marked the first Practice Year (Practice Year 1) of VQB5 with Practice Year 2 set to take place from 2022-2023.

VQB5 used two nationally recognized quality standard measurements for Practice Year 1 of VQB5. During Practice Year 2, the VDOE proposes the continued use of Interactions and Curriculum to measure quality and inform improvement.

* Interactions - This standard measures the quality of teacher-child interactions and instruction in a developmentally-appropriate way, as measured by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). All children benefit socially and academically from being in classrooms with high quality teacher-child interactions, including children from diverse settings, dual language learners (DLLs) and children with special needs.
* Curriculum - This standard measures the use of a comprehensive curriculum in alignment with Virginia’s early learning and development standards to ensure that all areas of learning and development are being covered in developmentally appropriate ways. This standard will also help ensure that early childhood programs have curricula that provide guidance on how to individualize instruction based on needs, including children with disabilities, suspected delays, or other special needs.

Over half of all of Virginia’s 3,142 publicly-funded programs opted to participate in Practice Year 1. In Practice Year 2, the VDOE hopes to engage 100% of publicly-funded birth-to-five programs, including up to 9,100 classrooms, in this final opportunity for practice.

Based on extensive stakeholder engagement and feedback, Practice Year 1 data analysis and other strategic analysis, the VDOE proposed enhancements for Practice Year 2 of VQB5 to scale the system and ensure consistency of implementation.

The VDOE received a full endorsement from the Early Childhood Advisory Committee for the proposed Practice Year 2 guidelines. The 22 member committee convened for a three hour discussion of the proposal on March 24, 2022.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board receive for first review the *Guidelines for Practice Year 2 of the Early Childhood Unified Measurement and Improvement System.*

Dr. Mann shared that she has been impressed with the extraordinary level of engagement with the field throughout the transition process. Throughout the transition, there has been a genuine effort to focus on experience, curriculum, and support. She noted the value of looking at curriculum and observations as a way to create a strong foundation.

Dr. Mann asked about the appeals process and if there is an opportunity to consider where and how other evaluations may be factored into the observation process. Ms. Conway acknowledged observation fatigue. Staff is considering how to address multiple external review and receive stakeholder input on how the field would like different observations to be included.

Ms. Holton asked if during the first full year of implementation, will participation in the quality improvement system will be mandatory. Ms. Conway responded that there will be full participation. Ms. Conway later clarified the distinction between mandatory participation in the quality rating system and use of the state-approved curriculum. She said that the curriculum will not be required but providers will get “full points” if using the state-approved curriculum.

Ms. Holton followed up asking if the financial retention incentives will be available to all participating providers. Ms. Conway responded that he incentive would be available to all child care and family child educators for the next two year but would not apply to school-based teachers. A systemic approach is needed to financing solutions that accounts for strengths-based approaches and addresses retention.

The Board accepted this item for first review.

**L. First Review of Amendments to the Licensure Regulations for School Personnel (8VAC20-23) to Include New Statutory Requirements for Initial Licensure and Renewal of a License**

Dr. Joan B. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Teacher Education and Licensure, presented this item to the Board on first review.

During the 2021 Session, the General Assembly passed House Bill 1904 and Senate Bill 1196 requiring every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license to complete instruction or training in cultural competency, as prescribed by the Board. To meet this statutory requirement, amendments to the Board’s *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* (8VAC20-23) are necessary. This legislation also requires each local school board to adopt and implement policies that require each teacher and any other school board employee holding a license issued by the Board to complete cultural competency training, in accordance with guidance issued by the Board, at least every two years.

The Board approved the Notice of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRA) for this regulatory change at the June 17, 2021, meeting. The NOIRA was submitted for executive branch review and the public comment period closed on February 16, 2022.

Pursuant to the requirements of this legislation, the Board approved the *Guidance on Cultural Competency Training for Teachers and Other Licensed School Board Employees in Virginia Public Schools* at the November 18, 2021, meeting. Following a 30-day public comment period, the guidance became effective January 6, 2022.

The proposed amendments to the *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* align the regulations with state statute.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board accept for first review the amendments to the *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* to comport with legislation from the 2021 General Assembly.

Dr. Durán commented that he pleased to see these regulatory changes moving forward as training all educators in cultural competency is important. Strength comes from diversity in the classroom, and it helps enhance all educators to learn from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

Superintendent Balow clarified that it was her recommendation to move these regulatory changes forward but that there is a continued discussion on how to further define cultural competency based on Governor Youngkin’s executive order one. There is a sensitivity and commitment to ensure that cultural competency is important.

Dr. Mann shared perspectives from the Virginia Student Council Association conference that she attended in March. Students shared the importance of this type of training for teachers.

Ms. Holton confirmed that the Board has no discretion in making these regulatory changes and asked Superintendent Balow to share her specific concerns about the regulatory changes before June. Superintendent Balow affirmed that the regulatory changes are ministerial and are not of concern.

Ms. Holton asked if it would be prudent to waive first review since the regulatory changes are ministerial. Superintendent Balow responded that she did not recommend waiving first review. Ms. Holton asked about the need for another review if there were no concerns and the changes were required by statute. Superintendent Balow stated that there was no plan to change to regulatory language but that additional conversations were on-going.

The Board accepted this item for first review.

**M. First Review of Revisions to the List of 2022-2023 Board of Education Approved Industry Credentials, Occupational Competency Assessments, and Professional Licenses**

Dr. David Eschelman, Director of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, and Ms. Jane Brown, CTE Credentialing Specialist, presented this item to the Board on first review.

As required by Board regulation, the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education annually presents the additions and deletions to the list of Board of Education approved industry certifications, occupational competency assessments, and professional licenses. The additions and deletions were also presented to the Virginia CTE Advisory Committee.

The 2020 General assembly approved, and the Governor signed, House Bill 516 and Senate Bill 112 pertaining to high school graduation requirements. The legislation details the requirements for graduation (effective with the students who enter the ninth grade in the 2018–2019 school year. This requirements state that each graduate will 1) complete an Advanced Placement, honors, IB or dual enrollment course; or 2) complete a work-based learning experience; or 3) earn a career and technical education credential approved by the Board.

Due the emphasis and integral relationship of the Career and Technical Education credentials to the requirements for students to earn a Diploma, the VDOE evaluates, on an ongoing basis, the industry credentials against prescribed criteria.

Following Board approval, the list will be posted on Town Hall, pursuant to the requirements of the Administrative Process Act. Additionally, the new credentialing list will be updated in Verso and Canvas/Virtual Virginia, the state’s online repository of CTE courses and credentials. The details about each new credential including test and accommodations must be published. Once published in July, it gives school divisions the opportunity to review the new credentials and courses for the following school year and make adjustments in their learning management systems. Further, a Superintendent’s Memorandum will notify school divisions of the technical changes and additions to and deletions from the list of industry certifications, occupational competency assessments, and licenses and will be posted on the VDOE website.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board waive first review and approve the 38 new industry certification examinations, occupational competency assessments, and professional licenses to meet the requirements for graduation and the Career and Technical Education and STEM Seals. Further, it was recommended the Board approve the removal of 41 credentials that are no longer offered by the providers.

Dr. Durán asked why certain tests are no longer being offered. Ms. Brown responded that the vendor has shifted from providing the credential to other student services but other assessments are still available.

Dr. Anderson made a motion to waive first review and approve the 38 new industry certification examinations, occupational competency assessments, and professional licenses, and remove 41 credentials that are no longer offered by the providers. The motion was seconded by Dr. Davis-Vaught, and carried unanimously.

**N. First Review of Recommendations to Approve New Education (Endorsement) Programs at Institutions of Higher Education**

Dr. Joan B. Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Teacher Education and Licensure, presented this item to the Board on first review.

The *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia* requires that the Board approve requests from Virginia institutions of higher education to add new endorsement programs. Requests for new programs must be submitted annually by March 31.

VDOE staff verified program endorsement competencies through the review of course descriptions and syllabi to determine alignment with regulatory criteria, including supervised classroom instruction. A review of the Request for New Endorsement Program application submitted by the institution evidenced written documentation of school divisions’ demand data, as well as institutional and school division support for the requested programs.

On March 21, 2022, ABTEL recommended that the Board grant approval for the new endorsement programs. The following is the list of the institutions of higher education and the new endorsements requested.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **College/University** | **Education Endorsement Program** | **Program Level** |
| **Averett University** | English as a second language preK-12 | Graduate |
| Mathematics specialist for elementary and middle education | Graduate |
| **Liberty University** | Science – Earth science | Graduate |
| Science – Physics | Graduate |
| **Randolph College** | Theatre arts preK-12 | Graduate |
| **University of Richmond** | Elementary education preK-6 | Graduate |
| English | Graduate |
| History and social sciences | Graduate |
| Mathematics | Graduate |
| **Virginia Tech** | Elementary education preK-6 | Undergraduate |

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board waive first review and approve ABTEL’s recommendation to approve the new education (endorsement) programs.

Dr. Durán made a motion to waive first review and approve the recommended new education endorsement programs. The motion was seconded by Dr. Davis-Vaught, and carried unanimously.

**O. First Review of Recommendations for School Division of Innovation (SDI) Designation**

Dr. Brendon Albon, Director of STEM and Innovation, presented this item to the Board for first review.

The 2017 Virginia General Assembly approved HB1981 which directed the Board to develop regulations for the designation of School Divisions of Innovation (SDI). To be eligible for designation, a local school board would submit a locally board approved plan of innovation to the Board using criteria as presented within the regulations.

Applications are reviewed against a rubric that consists of criteria outlined by the goals of the legislation. Upon being designated as an SDI, the division is tasked to act as a laboratory of innovation, to share their unique programs and solutions to other school divisions across the Commonwealth. A SDI designation also provides for the ability to request flexibilities from certain regulatory provisions and is permitted to adopt alternative policies for school administrators, teachers, and staff to meet the diverse needs of students.

Radford City Schools performed an extensive environmental scan of students, parents, and local industry and concluded a strong need and desire for equipping students to be better prepared to enter the workplace with enhanced computational thinking skills and computer science credentials. Their innovations include:

* Integrating the Virginia Computer Science and Digital Learning Integration standards, directly into their core taught curriculum, as far down as kindergarten,
* Expanding their Project Lead the Way course offerings to include more Computer Science, Engineering, and Biomedical offerings throughout middle and high school,
* Partnering with Radford University, Virginia Tech, and New River Community College to enhance teacher pedagogies to enrich STEM+C student learning,
* Development of Digital Portfolios which will follow the skills progressions acquired by students from kindergarten through high school,
* Participation in a Community Showcase of learned skills for all students in Kindergarten through eleventh grade,
* and, the completion of a senior capstone project by all graduating seniors.

Radford has a robust internal evaluation mechanism and will be required to submit an annual report to the VDOE highlighting successes and challenges experienced. Radford City Schools has not requested any flexibility from regulations as part of the SDI application.

Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Board waive first review and approve the designation of School Division of Innovation on Radford City Schools for the years 2022 through 2027.

Ms. Holton asked how many divisions are designated as a SDI. Dr. Albon responded that there are 13 SDI with one pending approval.

Dr. Anderson made a motion to waive first review and approve the SDI designation for Radford City School for 2022-2027. The motion was seconded by Dr. Davis-Vaught, and carried unanimously.

***DISCUSSION ON CURRENT ISSUES by Board of Education Members and the Superintendent of Public Instruction***

Dr. Durán inquired about a legislative update following the General Assembly session. Superintendent Balow noted that the budget is still pending along with several pieces of legislation. An update would be premature but did anticipate that the Board would receive an update at the June meeting.

Dr. Durán provided a brief update on the PreK3 PALS Literacy Screener work group work that has recently formed. He intends to provide a substantive update at the next meeting.

Ms. Holton shared that she has attended two recent meetings of ABTEL. The members are a hardworking group doing good work, and commended their recommendations to the Board. At those meetings, there was discussion on the Virginia Literacy Act, and questions/concerns about the legislation being an unfunded mandate. She believes the implementation of the legislation will need a communications strategy.

Ms. Holton noted that Mr. George Willcox, who recently retired from the VDOE as Director of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, recently passed away. She commended Mr. Willcox’s career and work in CTE, and expressed sympathy for his family.

Dr. Davis-Vaught acknowledged teachers, principals, and assistant principals for their hard work providing instruction and remediation for the upcoming SOL assessments.

Dr. Mann shared that she recently attended the Virginia Student Council Association convention, and had an opportunity to connect with student leaders across the state. They shared concerns with her related to:

* resource equity for school facilities and construction and the impact of subpar conditions on students and teachers;
* mental health and the struggles and stresses they are experiencing, especially their peers who struggle with gender identity;
* the economic burden of paying for fees to access college;
* the lack of attention for helping students develop skills and learn to cope with anxiety and entering the working world;
* concerns on access to factual information for reproductive health, consent, etc.;
* effective teaching practices and ensuring teachers are culturally competent in the classroom; and
* integrating students with special needs and the power of kindness and inclusivity.

Dr. Durán thanked Dr. Mann for sharing the concerns expressed by students. It is important to always keep students at the forefront of decision-making.

## WORK SESSION

The Board convened in a work session on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, to receive presentations related to the virtual education and virtual learning. The Board welcomed John Watson of the Digital Learning Collaborative, Dr. Brian Mott with Virtual Virginia, and Cindy Hamblin of the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance. Additionally, the Board received presentations on a proposal to adopt special provisions regarding the use of the chronic absenteeism indicator for school accreditation, an update on strengthening quality in early childhood classrooms in Practice Year 1 of the Unified Measurement and Improvement System, and an overview of the new Virginia Alternative Assessment Program and the process used to establish cut scores. No votes were taken. The agenda and meeting materials can be accessed at <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/index.shtml>.

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE BUSINESS SESSION

There being no further business of the Board, Dr. Mann adjourned the business meeting at 11:29a.m.

Dr. Tammy Mann, Vice President