DATE XXXX

The Honorable Ralph Northam, Governor

Members of the Virginia General Assembly

Commonwealth of Virginia

Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Northam and Members of the Virginia General Assembly:

On behalf of the Board of Education, and pursuant to Article VIII, § 2 of the *Constitution of Virginia* and [§ 22.1-18.01](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter2/section22.1-18.01/) of the *Code of Virginia*, I am pleased to transmit the *Standards of Quality* (SOQ), which were prescribed by the Board on October 17, 2019. The Board re-prescribed the 2019 SOQ on September 17, 2020. These evidenced-based proposals are the result of a nearly two-year review of research, outreach, and deliberation. In developing the amendments, the Board considered alternative policies and outcomes as well as feedback from focus groups and the public.

Since the codification of the SOQ in 1984, the Board has primarily played an advisory role in amending the standards. As part of this review cycle, the Board reflected on its mandate as it relates to the SOQ and as assigned by [Article VIII § 2](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/constitution/article8/section2/) of the *Constitution of Virginia* and [§ 22.1-18.01](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title22.1/chapter2/section22.1-18.01/) of the *Code of Virginia*. In the interest of maintaining the highest standard of quality for public education in Virginia, the Board resolved to uphold its constitutional and statutory responsibility by prescribing changes to the SOQ. For the 2021 SOQ review cycle, the Board unanimously reaffirms the SOQ revisions prescribed in 2019.

A background of the Board’s SOQ review process and justifications for each SOQ amendment are provided in the enclosed document. The enclosure further details the Board’s decision to take a more decisive role in the development of the SOQ as per its constitutional and statutory authority. The cost estimates listed below are updated to reflect General Assembly action taken in 2020 and 2021 and the remaining budgetary needs to fully realize the prescriptions. The prescriptions were also reordered to reflect the Board’s priorities and promote action in areas that have not yet been addressed in some capacity.

**OVERVIEW OF SOQ REVISIONS**

1. Equity Fund (Enhanced At-Risk Add-On)

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $77.9M*

1. Class Size Reduction and Experienced Teachers in K-3

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: No state impact*

1. New Teacher Leader and Expanded Teacher Mentor Programs

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $116.4M*

1. Principal Mentorship Program

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $1.2M*

1. One Full-Time Assistant Principal for Every 400 Students

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $76.6M*

1. One Full-Time Principal in Every Elementary School

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $7.7M*

1. Work-based Learning Coordinators

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $1.2M*

1. Reading Specialists in K-5

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $37.8M*

1. English Learner Teachers

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $14.9M*

1. Specialized Student Support

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $48.8M*

1. One Full-Time School Counselor for Every 250 Students

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $52.3M*

1. Eliminate the Recession-Era “Support Cap” in the Appropriation Act

*Estimated FY 2022 impact: $373.5M*

The Board of Education is grateful for the Governor and General Assembly’s action taken in 2020 and 2021 and ongoing work on behalf of Virginia’s public schools. The members of the Board share in your commitment and pledge to remain focused on providing a high-quality and equitable education to all Virginia learners. Thank you for your partnership and support.

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Gecker

President

Cc: The Honorable Atif Qarni

Secretary of Education

Kathy Burcher

Deputy Secretary of Education

Dr. James F. Lane

Superintendent of Public Instruction