**Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) Minutes – September 29, 2021**

The Virtual Learning Advisory Committee (VLAC) held a general committee meeting remotely through electronic means (Zoom platform) on Wednesday, September 29, 2021 from 1:00-2:30PM. Dr. Meg Foley, Virtual Learning Coordinator and Mr. Reginald Fox, Virtual Learning Specialist presided the meeting starting with the welcome and virtual protocols. The disclaimer was provided on the screen that the meeting was held pursuant to the *2021 Appropriation Act language –*[SB7001](https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?213+ful+SB7001) and *meeting by electronic means set forth in subsection C of*[*§ 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia*](https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title2.2/chapter37/section2.2-3708.2/)*.*

Participants in attendance represent the following agencies, boards, and community:

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), and Virtual Education Regulations Workgroup.

Members in attendance are as follows:

Dr. Keisha Anderson, VBOE

* 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

ab-Dr. Mervin B. Daughtery, Region I, Chesterfield County Schools

* (Mr. Ernest Longworth, Designee Chesterfield County Schools)

ab-Dr. Jeffrey Smith, Region II, Hampton City Schools

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

ab-Dr. Kevin Newman, Region IV, Manassas City Public Schools (Mr. Dave

Lyon)

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

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

ab-Dr. Kevin Siers, Region VII, Pulaski County Public Schools (Mr. Lincoln

Whitaker)

ab-Mr. Robbie W. Mason, Region VIII, Charlotte County Public Schools

* (Ms. Karen Osborne, Designee Charlotte County Public Schools)
* Mr. Rodney Jordan, Virginia School Boards Association
* Dr. Ben Kiser, Executive Director, Virginia Association of School Superintendents

ab-Mr. Bert Schmidt, President & Chief Executive Officer, WHRO

* Mitzi Fehl-Seward, Vice President of Digital Learning, WHRO
* Dr. Brian Mott, Executive Director, Virtual VA

Workgroup:

* 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)

ab-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/changed jobs)
* Dr. Karen Richardson, Executive Director, Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE)
* Ms. Christine Bali, Regional Sales Director, Edgenuity

ab-Mr. Dave Edwards, Powerschool

Dr. James Lane, State Superintendent of Public Education provided remarks.

The agenda was presented followed by introductions of participants in attendance. Selected participants made presentations on relative topics, and discussion was held from the group.

Committee Purpose, Role, Term – Mr. Michael Bolling

* 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

Historical Framework for Draft Recommendations for Virtual School Draft Regulations

* Impact of COVID-19 & Virtual Learning
* Expansion of Virtual Learning
* Expansion of Virtual Schools and evolving
* Proposed 2013 Amendments to the [*Regulations Establishing the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*](http://lis.virginia.gov/000/reg/TOC08020.HTM%23C0131), 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

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.

Presentations from the Virtual Education Regulations Workgroup included the following topics. Specific information is included in the PowerPoint presentation filed in the office and on the VDOE website. <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/virtual_learning/advisory_committee/index.shtml>

Group 1: Class Size/Teacher Load & Staffing – Dr. Ashley Ellis & Dr. Brendon Albon

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

Group 2: Instructional Time – Dr. Susan Patrick & Mr. Reginald Fox

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

Group 3: Data, Reporting & Operational – Dr. Karen Richardson & Dr. Meg Foley

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

The participants were provided an opportunity to discuss and provide feedback after each group presentation.

Group 1:

Discussion included expectations of the teacher; aligned with class size.

Class size could range based on leveraging for original content versus credit recovery courses.

Special needs challenges exist onsite, and please be sure to address concerns online to eliminate any gaps in services. Provide EL and students with disabilities the most appropriate accommodations.

Group 2:

Discussion included providing base-line expectations for recording attendance in virtual settings; allow local flexibility and innovation. See guidelines provided on attendance during pandemic. A point was discussed about parents having children in different schools, and eliminate confusion on attendance at the local level.

In virtual school settings, provide attendance data.

Another discussion included providing standards, accountability and quality; however, what regulations address student acceleration and measuring success based on student outcomes?

Consideration – course content – how are we measuring quality? Discussion included access to quality content across the Commonwealth.

Do not create regulations that would restrict local school boards and school divisions to be innovative.

Group 3:

The group was asked to provide any additional topics or considerations for virtual education schools or programs. The discussion include some examples (such as funding for full-time virtual students (portion of ADM), specialized training; microcredentials, virtual teacher evaluation; additional considerations?)

Other Considerations:

Funding a virtual school, specialized professional development, virtual teacher evaluation

Funding in schools is tied to traditional standards of instruction and operation in a physical building. How can these metrics change to include virtual schools but not have an adverse effect?

How will/may the regulations address Blended Learning?

Will the regulations address what content is provided and how it is assessed?

School divisions need freedom to leverage Virtual Learning to leverage this to innovate instructional practice.

We need to continue addressing access and equity issues in virtual settings and its efffects. Maximize opportunities for minority participation in virtual education.

The proposed timeline was shared.

* *June 2021:* [*NOIRA*](http://register.dls.virginia.gov/process.shtml) *(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 1st Reading Board of Education*

The participants were given an opportunity to ask final questions prior to the close of the meeting. Next steps will include scheduling the spring meeting of the VLAC in March 2022. The Virtual Education Regulations Workgroup sub-groups will meet in October.

Mr. Michael Bolling, Dr. Brendon Albon, Dr. Meg Foley, and Mr. Reginald Fox all thanked the committee and guest participants for their participation in this meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30PM.