



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

February 7, 2014

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Public Notice: Fast Track Amendments to the Regulations Governing Local School Boards and School Divisions (Local Textbook Approval)

As part of its responsibility for promulgating new regulations or revising or repealing existing regulations, pursuant to § [22.1-17](#) of the *Code of Virginia*, the Board of Education (Board) is required to develop a statement of the administrative impact and projected cost to school divisions related to implementing and complying with such regulations. In addition, the Board and the Virginia Department of Education are required to send a copy of the statement to each division superintendent.

In 2011, the Board of Education adopted [Guidelines for Local Textbook Approval](#) to assist school divisions as they review and approve textbooks at the local level. The guidelines encourage local school boards that opt to use a textbook that has not been approved by the Board of Education to conduct a local textbook review that includes components similar to the state level review.

On February 28, 2013, the Board of Education approved a proposal to amend the *Regulations Governing Local School Boards and School Divisions* (8VAC 20-720) to include the addition of provisions from the *Guidelines for Local Textbook Approval*, thus changing them from optional guidelines to required regulations. The regulations would require local school boards that opt to use a textbook that has not been approved by the Board of Education to conduct a local textbook review that includes components similar to the state level review. Such components include a correlation with the Standards of Learning for the particular subject area, if they exist, and a review of strengths and weaknesses in instructional planning and support. Additionally, the publisher of the textbook must certify the accuracy of the content of the textbook and sign an agreement to correct all factual and editing errors found in a textbook, at its expense. Finally, the publisher must certify that the books meet other requirements of the *Code of Virginia* related to textbooks.

The amendment to the regulation was published in the [Virginia Register of Regulations Volume: 30 Issue: 12](#), February 10, 2014. A public comment forum is open February 10 through March 12, 2014. The amendment to the regulations will become effective March 27, 2014.

For more information on this regulatory action or to submit a public comment during the comment period, please visit <http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/ViewStage.cfm?stageid=6495>.

If you have any questions, please contact Christonya Brown, coordinator for history and social science, Office of Humanities and Early Childhood Education, by e-mail at Christonya.Brown@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2893.

