

Review of Possible Changes in State Policies to Reduce the Administrative Burden on School Divisions and the Department

**Presented to the Joint Subcommittee on
Elementary and Secondary Education Funding**

**Anne Wescott
Assistant Superintendent
for Policy and Communications**



Authority for the Report

The Appropriation Act, in Item 140 states:

The Department of Education shall review state laws, regulations, and procedures that could be modified, reduced, or eliminated in an effort to minimize the administrative burden on local school divisions and the Department of Education. The findings from this review shall be submitted to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees by November 1, 2009.

How the Review Was Conducted

In response to this mandate, the Department held a number of meetings to review the reporting requirement for each school division and the associated law, regulation, and/or procedure. Each requirement was reviewed to determine whether the reporting requirement:

- was needed for state and/or federal reporting or funding purposes;
- was needed to continue in its current form in order to meet certain timelines for reporting or funding;
- could be consolidated with an existing report; and
- could be eliminated with an understanding that relevant information would still be available upon request.

How The Review Was Conducted

(continued)

The Department reviewed its existing calendar of reports, the reporting requirements in the Code of Virginia, Board regulations, and reporting requirements in the Appropriation Act and grouped all reports into three categories:

- Reporting requirements that could be eliminated to reduce the administrative burden to school divisions, the Department or both entities;
- Reporting requirements that could be consolidated into existing applications; and
- Reporting requirements that must be retained.

A total of 99 reports have been reviewed.



Reporting Requirements: Proposed Eliminations

Pages 4-7 of the Department's report provide a detailed listing of 8 reports being proposed for elimination pending General Assembly approval. These reports are:

- ✓ The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) Report
- ✓ The Evaluation of Adult Education Programs
- ✓ The Individual Student Alternative Education Plan Report
- ✓ The Plan and Report for Programs of Prevention, Intervention, and Remediation
- ✓ The Regional Alternative Education Programs Report
- ✓ The Standards of Learning Web-Based Technology Initiative
- ✓ The State Funded Remedial Plans Report
- ✓ The Status of Regional Alternative Education Placements

Reporting Requirements: To Be Consolidated

Pages 8 and 9 of the Department's report provide a detailed listing of 14 reports that will be consolidated with existing applications by next year. Some of these requirements pertain to:

- ✓ Reports concerning instructional personnel (supply and demand, career switcher information)
- ✓ Charter school reporting
- ✓ Local Wellness Policies
- ✓ Private School Participation in Federal programs

Reporting Requirements: Consolidations that have Taken Place

Pages 9 and 10 of the Department's report provide a detailed listing of 20 reports that have been consolidated with existing applications. Some of these requirements pertain to:

- ✓ Federal reporting for the enrollment of homeless students and the enrollment of students who are English Language Learners (ELLs)**
- ✓ Federal reporting (NCLB) related to school choice, supplemental services, and the other academic indicator**
- ✓ State programs such as the K-3 Class Size Reduction**

Reporting Requirements: To be Retained

Pages 11-16 of the Department's report provide a detailed listing of 57 reports that must be retained to meet state and/or federal reporting requirements. Some of these requirements pertain to:

- ✓ Federal reporting related to: the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act; the Carl D. Perkins Act (Career and Technical Education); the Workforce Investment Act; and State Fiscal Stabilization Fund
- ✓ School division data that must be collected in order for the Department to calculate payments for programs in Direct Aid such as:
 - Remedial Summer School
 - Equipment related to Career and Technical Education
- ✓ School division data that must also be collected in order to re-benchmark the Standards of Quality and in order to provide reports to the federal government on Title I (Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged) and Impact Aid.

Proposed Report Eliminations: Acceptable Use Policy Report

- **The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) Report is required by the Code. School divisions must file with the Department an AUP approved by the local school board.**
- **The Department proposes eliminating this local school division submission and instead, requiring school divisions to post AUPs on their Web sites.**
- **Under this proposal, school divisions would also be required to certify compliance with this Web site posting requirement annually. This would be done through an existing data application to alleviate administrative burden at the local level.**
- **A change to the Code is required.**

Proposed Report Eliminations: Adult Education Programs

- School divisions must evaluate adult education programs annually and the Board of Education must collect the results and report the findings to the Governor and to the General Assembly.
- The Department must collect data from school divisions in order to meet federal requirements. The data collection used for federal reporting is the same data collection used to prepare this report. After the data are collected, the Department is required to submit a detailed report to the U.S. Department of Education.
- To alleviate the Department's reporting burden, an alternative to submitting this report would be for the Department to post all or part of the federal report on its Web site.
- A change to the Code is required.

Proposed Report Eliminations:

Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP)

- **The Department must annually report on the program's status.**
- **The submitted report is not tied to state funding, as the level of funding in the Appropriation Act has not changed and is determined as part of the Executive Budget process.**
- **The report collects information on: 1) the number of students served; 2) enrollment by age, gender, and ethnicity; and 3) the reasons for enrollment. The Department's student record collection already collects data on most of these elements, the ISAEP data collection could be consolidated into this application, eliminating a separate data collection for school divisions.**
- **The Department would continue to be able to provide data to the General Assembly on this program whenever necessary.**
- **A change to the Appropriation Act is required.**

Proposed Report Eliminations:

Prevention, Intervention, & Remediation (At-Risk) Programs

- The Appropriation Act states that to receive these funds, each school division shall certify to the Department that the state and local shares of the at-risk payment will be used to support approved programs. School divisions shall also report on each school division's comprehensive strategy for intervention, prevention, and remediation, including the number of students served and a review of available data.
- For Direct Aid programs residing outside of the Standards of Quality, school divisions must already annually certify to the Department that a local match to state funding will be provided. Consequently, a local certification process for funding already exists.

and ...



Proposed Report Eliminations:

Prevention, Intervention, & Remediation (At-Risk) Programs (continued)

- **The Department annually provides information to the General Assembly regarding the role of at-risk funding in the achievement and opportunity for all Virginia students. This information contains comprehensive data on state programs tied to at-risk children (such as early reading, ELL programs, remediation, and alternative education.) The Department intends to continue providing this information.**
- **If this report were eliminated, then a separate data collection for school divisions could also be eliminated.**
- **A change to the Appropriation Act is required.**

Proposed Report Eliminations: Regional Alternative Education Program

- **The Department must report on the status of state-funded slots allocated to regional alternative education programs. In this report, the Department provides information regarding the number of available slots, the number of students placed in the slots, the number of unused slots, and the number of requests by school divisions to utilize unused slots.**
- **The data collection associated with this report is necessary for state funding purposes. The Department is proposing to eliminate the report but not the data collection for school divisions.**
- **The Department would be able to provide data on unused slots in regional alternative education programs to the General Assembly whenever necessary.**
- **A change to the Appropriation Act is required.**

Proposed Report Eliminations: Standards of Learning Web-Based Technology

- **The Department must report on the status of this program annually.**
- **The data collection associated with this report is necessary for state funding purposes. The Department is proposing to eliminate the report but not the data collection for school divisions.**
- **The Department already provides extensive information on its Web site regarding the status of the program and will continue to do so. The existence of this information, which is available to the general public, makes the current reporting process duplicative.**
- **A change to the Appropriation Act is required.**

Proposed Report Eliminations: State Funded Remedial Plans

- **The Board of Education must report its analysis of statewide assessment of remediation programs, and any recommendations, prior to the commencement of the regular session of the General Assembly.**
- **This report pertains to remedial summer school, and the funding for this program is based upon the number of students served, not on the data contained in this report.**
- **Data to evaluate the effectiveness of remedial programs are available through existing applications at the Department. If the existing applications are used, then this data collection could be eliminated, thereby reducing local burden.**
- **The Department would be able to provide data on remedial programs to the General Assembly whenever necessary.**
- **A change to the Code is required.**

Proposed Report Eliminations: Regional Alternative Education Placements

- **The Board of Education must report on the effectiveness of such programs annually.**
- **This program was established in 1993. Since that time, funding has been included in the Appropriation Act for this program and the funding is not tied to this report. The program is well-established and this reporting requirement, the original intent of which was to report on programs that were in the pilot phase, is out-of-date.**
- **A data collection would be eliminated. The Department's student record data collection already contains an indicator to identify students assigned to alternative education programs. Using this identifier, information would be provided to the General Assembly upon request.**
- **A change to the Code is required.**

Reporting Requirements: Regulatory Review

- The Department also reviewed the status of all Board of Education regulations as part of this comprehensive review.
- The Board of Education currently has a total of 59 regulations. In the past four years, 11 regulations have been repealed.
- The Board is currently in the process of reducing regulatory requirements by streamlining, updating, and consolidating 18 regulations into one regulation.

Next Steps

The Department of Education plans to continue examining opportunities to:

- modify or eliminate unnecessary or out-of-date reporting requirements;
- consolidate other reporting requirements to permit local school divisions to submit one, rather than multiple, reports;
- review Board regulations for additional opportunities that will reduce regulatory burden and streamline existing processes; and
- review new federal reporting requirements and changes to existing requirements so that existing reports and processes can be used to meet federal reporting.