

*Recommendations on High School Assessments*  
*from the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee:*  
*A Report in Response to H.B. 525 (2016)*

**Submitted to the Virginia Board of Education**  
**by Dr. Stewart D. Roberson, Chair,**  
**on behalf of the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee**  
**February 20, 2017**

### **Background on the Committee:**

The SOL Innovation Committee was created by the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor McAuliffe in 2014 as a statewide policy advisory committee on public education in the Commonwealth. The Committee was charged with periodically making “recommendations to the Board of Education and the General Assembly on (a) the Standards of Learning assessments, (b) authentic individual student growth measures, (c) alignment between the Standards of Learning and assessments and the School Performance Report Card, and (d) ideas on innovative teaching in the classroom.”

The inaugural committee members were appointed by former Secretary of Education, Anne Holton, in 2014 and Dr. Stewart Roberson was selected to serve as the Committee’s Chairman. Staff support for is provided by the Office of the Secretary of Education.

The Committee approved interim recommendations in the fall of 2014 and a robust set of recommendations on assessment and accountability in the Commonwealth in the fall of 2015. The full reports and associated executive summaries can be found online at:

<http://education.virginia.gov/initiatives/sol-innovation-committee/>

Legislation passed during the 2016 General Assembly session made a number of changes to the code section establishing the SOL Innovation Committee. First, the membership was expanded to include higher education and the business community and the terms of members were staggered. Second, the 2016 amendments require recommendations to be approved by a majority of legislative and nonlegislative members present at the time of a vote, and be sent to the Board of Education who shall then provide comment on the recommendations for the members of the General Assembly. The full text of the legislation can be found online at: <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?161+ful+CHAP0648>.

### **Requirements of H.B. 525:**

During the 2016 General Assembly session the legislature approved a bill requesting the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee to review and make recommendations to the Board of Education and the General Assembly on “the number, subjects, and question composition of standardized tests administered to public high school students in the Commonwealth.” The full text of the bill can be found online at <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?161+ful+CHAP0592> and is enclosed as Appendix B.

### **Process, Discussion and Development of Recommendations:**

In July 2016, the Secretary of Education appointed new membership of the Committee, which met twice in person as a full group, on September 27, and November 4. The Committee organized itself into two subcommittees to accomplish its work: 1) A Subcommittee on the Implementation of High School Redesign, chaired by Pat Murphy and 2) A Subcommittee on Refining Assessments, chaired by Jamelle Wilson.

The latter was charged with developing preliminary recommendations to address HB 525. The Subcommittee began meeting in the fall of 2016, and brought preliminary recommendations forward for consideration at the November 4 meeting with the full committee. Based on feedback obtained at that meeting, the subcommittee refined its recommendations, provided conference call briefings on its

revisions with members in December, and the full committee met via conference call in February for a vote.

### **Final Consensus and Recommendations for the Board's Consideration**

At the full Committee Conference call on February 10, 2017, Jamelle Wilson and Stewart Roberson led the members in a discussion and vote on the 8 on the proposed recommendations for consideration. In accordance with the changes made to the code in 2016, Chairman Roberson guided the committee through the voting process. Following those parameters, the committee approved the following recommendations:

1. Support the Board of Education's proposal to eliminate the requirement that students enrolled in any class with an end-of-course SOL test (currently there are 12) be required to take the associated end-of-course SOL test if they have already earned their verified credit. It is imperative that the state accreditation model recognize and account for the impact that the elimination of this requirement will have on schools. As the Board considers student achievement metrics within the new accreditation model, it should adjust these metrics to address the impact of the elimination of these tests on a school's accreditation.
2. Support the Board's reduction in the number of verified credits required for graduation so that students gain greater opportunities to differentiate their learning experiences in their later high school years.
  - a. Support the Board's existing proposal to require end-of-course SOL test to earn verified credits for English, math and science.
  - b. Recommend the Board add to that proposal (2a) to also require a verified credit in writing for students, in both standard and advanced diplomas.
3. Support the use of reliable, valid and performance assessments in the state's broader assessment system and as one type of verified credit. Recognizing the need for statewide accountability, we recommend the state's development of a bank of qualifying performance assessments and rubrics aligned with the Virginia Standards of Learning, the 5 C's (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, citizenship) and the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate*.

**APPENDIX A:  
SOL Innovation Committee Members**

Dr. Robert Benson of King George, Superintendent, King George County Schools  
Dr. Kim Blosser of Fairfax, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Lord Fairfax Community College  
Dr. Valerie Bowman of Richmond, Pediatrician, Bon Secours Developmental & Special Needs Pediatrics  
Jamie Clancey of Culpeper, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Clancey Counseling, LLC  
Karen Cross of Bristol, Teacher, Bristol Public Schools  
Michael Davidson of Marion, Principal, Smyth County Public Schools  
Dr. Francisco Durán of Fairfax, Chief Academic Officer, Fairfax County Public Schools  
Danielle Fitz-Hugh of Petersburg, President and CEO, Petersburg Chamber of Commerce  
Deborah Frazier of Spotsylvania, Principal, Spotsylvania County Public Schools  
Jim Gallagher of Lynchburg, Supervisor of Student Services, Amherst County Public Schools  
Sarah Gross of Richmond, Parent, Richmond Public Schools  
Linda Grubba of Lynchburg, School Counselor, Campbell County Public Schools  
Dr. Rachel Holloway of Blacksburg, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, Virginia Tech  
Linda Hyslop of Hopewell, Member, Hopewell City School Board  
Jim Livingston of Manassas, Teacher, Prince William County Public Schools  
Dr. Brian Matney of Virginia Beach, Office of Research and Evaluation, Virginia Beach Public Schools  
Dr. Oliver McBride of Hillsville, retired superintendent, Carroll County Public Schools  
Laurie McCullough of Charlottesville, Director, Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Dr. Pat Murphy of Arlington, Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools  
Ting-Yi Oei, of Fairfax, retired teacher and administrator, Fairfax and Loudoun County Public Schools  
Dr. Jennifer Parish of Poquoson, Superintendent, Poquoson City Public Schools  
Annette Patterson of Forest, Special Education Teacher, Bedford County Public Schools  
Todd Putney of Roanoke, Vice President of Human Resources, Medical Facilities of America  
Dr. Stewart Roberson of Richmond, Chairman, Moseley Architects  
Vivian Sanchez-Jones of Roanoke, School & Community Liaison, Roanoke Public Schools  
Bobby Shockley of Glen Allen, Assistant Principal, Petersburg Public Schools  
Karen Thomsen of Bridgewater, Principal, Rockingham County Public Schools  
Delegate Jeion Ward of Hampton, retired teacher, Hampton City Public Schools  
Dr. Jamelle Wilson of Richmond, Dean of the School of Professional and Continuing Studies, University of Richmond

*Members of the House of Delegates:*

Delegate David Bulova  
Delegate Tag Greason  
Delegate Jim LeMunyon  
Delegate Roxann Robinson

*Members of the Senate:*

Senator Ryan McDougle  
Senator Jeremy McPike  
Senator Stephen Newman

*Ex Officio Members:*

Dr. Steven Staples, Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Dr. Billy Cannaday, President of the Board of Education  
Dr. Dietra Trent, Secretary of Education

**APPENDIX B:  
Text of H.B. 525 (2016)**

<http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?161+ful+CHAP0592>

**CHAPTER 592**

*An Act to require the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee to review and make recommendations to the Board of Education and the General Assembly on standardized testing in public high schools in the Commonwealth.*

[H 525]

Approved April 1, 2016

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

**1.** *§ 1. The Standards of Learning Innovation Committee (the Committee) shall review and, no later than November 1, 2016, make recommendations to the Board of Education and the General Assembly on the number, subjects, and question composition of standardized tests administered to public high school students in the Commonwealth. Such recommendations shall be approved by a majority of the legislative members of the Committee in attendance and a majority of the nonlegislative members of the Committee in attendance. The Board of Education shall review such recommendations and submit to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health, in advance of the 2017 Regular Session of the General Assembly, any comments on such recommendations that the Board deems appropriate.*