

MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
Committee on School and Division Accountability
Wednesday; November 19, 2014; 3 p.m.
Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building

Welcome and Opening Comments

The following Board of Education (Board) members were present for the November 19, 2014 Committee on School and Division Accountability meeting: Diane Atkinson; Christian Braunlich; Dr. Billy Cannaday, Jr.; Sal Romero, Jr.; and Joan Wodiska. Dr. Steven Staples, the superintendent of public instruction, was also present.

Mrs. Atkinson, chairman of the committee, convened the meeting and welcomed the Board members and guests. She also introduced the new Board member, Mr. Romero, who is an assistant principal at a school in Harrisonburg, Va.

Approval of Minutes from the October 21, 2014 Meeting

Mrs. Wodiska made a motion to approve the minutes for the October 21, 2014 committee meeting, the motion was seconded by Dr. Cannaday, and the minutes were approved by the committee members. Mr. Romero abstained because he was not present at that meeting.

Public Comment

There was no one present who wished to provide public comment.

Introductory Comments

Dr. Staples acknowledged the passing of Dr. James "Jim" Lanham, a long-time educator and former director of teacher licensure for the Virginia Department of Education, and his contributions to the Franklin City Public Schools after he retired.

Revised Corrective Action Plan Required by the Division-Level Review of Franklin City Public Schools

The presenters for this item were Beverly Rabil, director of the department's office of school improvement, and Willie J. Bell, Jr., the school superintendent for Franklin City Public Schools (FCPS). In addition, six of the seven FCPS school board members were present: Jeanette Austin; Will Councill, vice-chairman; Nancy Goodwin; Dr. Andrea Hall-Leonard; Edna King, school board chairman; and Sherita Ricks-Parker. This item regarding an amended corrective action plan is before the Board for first review tomorrow.

Ms. Rabil stated that the Standards of Quality (SOQ) require local school boards to maintain *Fully Accredited* schools and to take corrective action for schools that are not *Fully Accredited*. When the Board of Education has obtained evidence through the

academic review that the failure of schools within a division to achieve full accreditation status is related to division-level failure to implement the SOQ, the Board may require a division-level academic review.

On October 24, 2013, the Board placed FCPS in division-level academic review status and authorized the department to begin the review process. This process was conducted December 1-5, 2013. On March 27, 2014, the Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the FCPS school board and the Board.

As required by the SOQ, the FCPS school board and the central office staff had to include four key priorities in the corrective action plan and implement certain essential actions related to the findings of the division-level review process to improve student achievement:

1. Curricula Alignment
2. Human Resource Management and Teachers and Support
3. Purpose and Direction
4. Leadership and Governance

The corrective action plan was submitted on April 24, 2014. At that time, the Board announced that a public hearing regarding the corrective action plan would be held in Franklin City to obtain input from the community. The public hearing was held on May 14, 2014 at Joseph P. King Middle School, and a report on the public hearing was submitted to the Board on May 22, 2014. The corrective action plan submitted at the June 26, 2014 Board meeting included all of the essential actions noted in the MOU as well as the essential actions offered by the department and the Board at the April 24 and May 22 meetings.

The June 2014 temporary corrective plan was in effect from June 26, 2014 to November 30, 2014. During that time, the school division's new superintendent and the school board formed a committee to amend the corrective action plan to include additional essential actions. They were required to include, at a minimum, parents, students, residents, business members, faith-based community representatives, city officials, community college representatives, principals, and teachers. The amended corrective action plan was developed based on input from this committee and submitted to the Board and is included in today's materials.

Mr. Bell then introduced members of the FCPS school board present and provided information about the corrective action plan. Ms. Atkinson then told Mr. Bell that she thought additional information was needed so that the Board could understand better what it is they are going to be doing and how they will be judging their own effectiveness. She said many of the elements in the plan are not as robust as she would like to see.

Mr. Bell began by saying that what they have done is a snapshot of the process as well as the actual work that was done by the Superintendent's Advisory Council with the corrective action plan. The Advisory Council is in the process of working through a strategic plan that will re-address the mission, vision, and beliefs of the school division.

The Advisory Council is composed of key community representatives from all wards throughout the city. The Council has four subcommittees: Curricular Alignment; Human Resource Management; Purpose and Direction; and Leadership and Governance. One of the things the Council did was to create a glossary so that laymen in the community would understand the education terms. Many of those terms came from the glossary on the department's website. Mr. Bell said a consultant worked with the group and the Council decided the process. They had a copy of the MOU, they knew the task at hand, and they knew what they had to accomplish. He went through the process week by week until they reached week five when the final document was reviewed.

The Board members had many questions and comments, including the following:

- What was the process for members of the Advisory Council to submit questions and request changes and how were changes incorporated into the final document? He explained the process and said that there was additional review by members when changes were made.
- What actions in the initial corrective action were changed and how are they tied to the end results he wants to achieve? How is it connected to students' learning? How would the Advisory Council members know what was needed if they did not have an education background? What are the roles of the advisory group, the superintendent, the school board, and the principals? Mr. Bell said the Council worked through what had already been presented by school staff and he had one cabinet member in each group.
- A Board member said they want to be helpful. The school staff needs to inform the community about how certain strategies are important and why. The members have to have a deep understanding of what needs to be done.
- How does he know that what is learned in professional development is being implemented in the classroom? He responded that this is being monitored.
- Is the plan improving student achievement? He said student growth is being seen.
- What is happening with curricular alignment? Mr. Bell said there has been in-depth training with the administrators and teachers and this is being monitored.
- What interventions are available for those not meeting the benchmarks? Mr. Bell said the school division is using interventions to help the students improve, they have an intervention block, and they are involving the community and parents to encourage students to read.
- He also said much of the information being discussed is available in a monthly report. He said he thought that was separate from what was to be provided here, but he will provide additional information to the Board.

During the meeting, a copy of the information he had was emailed to Ms. Rabil. Board members thanked the school board members for coming.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Please click on [Meeting Materials](#) to view the supporting materials for this agenda item.