

VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

December 8, 2015

10:00 a.m.

House Room C

MINUTES

Attending:

Delegates Richard Anderson, Mamyé BaCote, Richard Bell, Peter Farrell, Christopher Peace
Senators Barbara Favola, Dave Marsden, Stephen Martin
Citizen members Chuck Slemp, Deirdre Goldsmith

Monitoring:

Citizen Member Frank Royal

Not Attending:

Mark Keam

Staff Attending

Amy Atkinson, Will Egen, and Leah Mills

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Delegate Christopher K. Peace, Chair

Delegate Peace started the meeting and asked that the members introduce themselves. He then recognized Delegate BaCote and noted that Delegate BaCote has been a member of the Virginia General Assembly since 2004. He highlighted some of her many accomplishments and honors. Delegate Peace recognized Senator Martin later in the meeting. He stated that both of the Commission members would be greatly missed.

II. Drug Prevention Strategies in Virginia's Universities

The Honorable Anne Holton, Secretary of Education

*Linda Hancock, Ph.D., Director of Wellness Resource Center
Virginia Commonwealth University*

Delegate Peace noted that at the Commission's September 8 meeting, Ms. Goldsmith requested that the Commission receive a formal presentation from the Office of the Secretary of Education on drug education policies among state universities. He welcomed Secretary Holton and thanked her for providing the Commission with an overview of prevention strategies. Delegate Peace also introduced Dr. Linda Hancock and thanked her for agreeing to present on this topic.

Secretary Holton provided an overview of Virginia activities to combat substance use disorders and then shared information about the Governor's Task Force on Prescription Drug and Heroin Abuse.

Dr. Hancock gave an interactive presentation on the best practices, as recognized by research, to identify, treat, and support students with substance-use disorders. Secretary Holton and Dr. Hancock then responded to questions from Commission

members. The presentation can be accessed on the Commission's webpage under the December 8 meeting tab.

Senator Favola made the following motion:

The Secretary of Education identify the current recreational substance use awareness and education programs at state schools, including an emphasis on peer-to-peer education, and compile a list of best practices and develop a plan for state universities to implement which addresses the increased use of recreational drugs by young people on college campuses. The Secretary of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, will examine what silos need to be brought together and the need for potentially mandating substance use programs at Virginia's two and four year schools and high schools which may include, but not limited to, peer-to-peer programs and college recovery programs. The Secretary of Education shall make recommendations for legislation, including the feasibility of requiring colleges and universities to offer substance abuse education programs and the use of peer counselors, to the Virginia Commission on Youth prior to the 2017 General Assembly Session.

The members adopted this recommendation. Ms. Atkinson stated that staff would work with Delegate Peace on this recommendation.

III. Update on Virginia's Regional Special Education Programs

John Eisenberg, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services, Virginia Department of Education

Delegate Peace stated that the Commission adopted a recommendation to request the Virginia Department of Education provide the Commission an update on their analysis of regional special education programs. Delegate Peace introduced John Eisenberg and thanked him for presenting on this topic.

Mr. Eisenberg presented on Virginia's special education regional tuition programs including the current status of these programs and issues for further study. He then outlined recommendations that emerged from the Department's study and responded to questions from Commission members. The presentation can be accessed on the Commission's webpage under the December 8 meeting tab.

IV. Decision Matrix – Student Athlete Concussions and Public Comment

Amy M. Atkinson, Executive Director, Virginia Commission on Youth

The draft recommendations, along with the public comments considered by the Commission, can be accessed on the Commission's webpage under the December 8 meeting tab. The adopted recommendations can also be viewed on the Commission's website.

Delegate Peace noted that at the Commission's October 20 meeting, the Commission received a presentation as well as draft findings and recommendations on the Commission's Student-Athlete Concussions Study. The Commission accepted public comment on the draft recommendations from this study through November 20th. Delegate Peace stated that Commission staff shared received public comments to the members prior to the meeting. A summary of the public comments are included in the decision matrix.

Delegate Peace stated that Ms. Atkinson would review the decision matrix and then the Commission will receive public comment – two minutes per person. After public comment, the Commission members will vote on the draft recommendations.

Ms. Atkinson reviewed the draft recommendations and public comments received.

The following individuals presented their comments:

- Jay Sedory, Virginia Athletic Trainers' Association
- Jim Council, Prince William Public Schools

Delegate Peace asked the members to turn to the Draft Decision Matrix and consider the Study's Draft Recommendations. Senator Martin moved Draft Recommendations 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 13, and 14 with Delegate BaCote seconding the motion. Delegate Farrell moved Draft Recommendation 11, Option 2 with Senator Marsden seconding the motion. Citizen Member Slep moved Recommendation 8, Option 1 with Senator Marsden seconding the motion. Senator Martin moved Draft Recommendation 12 with Delegate BaCote seconding the motion. The members amended the language to delete "request" and change to "introduce legislation." The Recommendations passed unanimously.

The Recommendations adopted by the Commission are listed below.

Round Table Finding – Public Awareness

Recommendation 1

Request the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to assess the feasibility of conducting regional information training sessions on updated concussion guidelines and concussion awareness. VDH previously conducted these trainings after the adoption of the 2011 Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes.

The Departments are encouraged to use materials from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other nationally recognized resources as a guideline for presenting information to communities. Information presented should focus on identification of concussions, the use of smart phone applications, short-term and long-term health effects of concussions, and safety precautions.

Round Table Finding – Return to Learn

Recommendation 2

Request the VDOE to develop additional guidance for the return to learn protocols which may be included in the Board of Education's Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes. Guidance should include case management procedures for return to learn, minimum standards for return to learn, and practical strategies for teachers to implement in the classroom. In addition, the Guidelines should include template communication consent forms that school divisions may use to help assist with the sharing of information between schools, families, and the medical community. School divisions should be encouraged to identify a person within school/school division to ensure that the return to learn protocol is being followed.

Round Table Finding – Legislative Action

Recommendation 5

Amend § 22.1-271.6 of the Code of Virginia to require local school divisions develop policies and procedures regarding "Return to Learn Protocol" by July 1, 2016, consistent with either the local school division's policies and procedures or the Board's Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes.

Recommendation 6

Amend § 22.1-271.6 of the Code of Virginia to change the group covered by the statute from student-athlete to student.

Round Table Finding – Best Practices

Recommendation 7

Request the Virginia Department of Education convene a stakeholder team to provide best practices resources for school divisions to use which outlines what other school divisions are doing with their policies on student-athlete concussions. Such resources shall help connect schools that do it well with schools that are having difficulty either developing policies or implementing them.

Round Table Finding – Funding

Recommendation 8, Option 1

Introduce a budget amendment to provide funding for low population density/poverty areas for additional supports in assisting students with concussions to return to the classroom successfully. Funding may be used for a licensed school nurse position employed by the school division, a licensed nurse contracted by the local school division, or a certified athletic trainer. Funding shall be used to support the return to learn protocol as defined by the Board of Education's Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes.

Recommendation 11

Request VDOE contact school divisions identified by the Virginia Commission on Youth as either not having a policy regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions in student-athletes or that have missing components, such as annual parental review of the division's concussion policies. VDOE will work with these school divisions to provide technical assistance and resources so that these divisions expeditiously adopt policies that fulfill the requirements set forth in the Board of Education's Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes.

Round Table Finding – Eligibility

Recommendation 12

Introduce legislation requiring a Pre-Participation Physical Examination (PPE) for athletes participating in school-sponsored athletics in middle school.

Round Table Finding – Eligibility

Recommendation 13

Request the Virginia Recreational Sports Association, the Virginia Youth Football and Cheering League, and the Virginia Youth Soccer Association to investigate ways to encourage concussion education including: providing strategies in concussion prevention, the development of a youth league report card for meeting safety standards for their members; and the establishment of policies and procedures regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions in student-athletes, consistent with either local school division's policies and procedures or the Board of Education's Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes.

Round Table Finding – Private Schools

Recommendation 14

Request the Virginia Council for Private Education to investigate ways to encourage concussion education, to provide strategies in concussion prevention, and to establish policies and procedures regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions in student-athletes, consistent with either the local school division's policies and procedures or the Board of Education's Guidelines for Policies on Concussions in Student-Athletes.

Delegate Peace thanked everyone for their participation. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:50 p.m.