



## VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

### Meeting Minutes

**Commission on Youth Meeting**  
May 3, 2021, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
(virtual meeting)

#### **Attending:**

Senators: Dave Marsden, Barbara Favola, David Suetterlein  
Delegates: Emily Brewer, Rob Bell, Joshua Cole, Karrie Delaney, Elizabeth Guzman  
Citizen Members: Dede Goldsmith, Avi Hopkins, Chris Rehak

#### **Not Attending:**

Delegate: Jay Jones

#### **Staff Attending:**

Amy Atkinson, Will Egen

#### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

*Senator Dave Marsden, Chair*

Senator Marsden welcomed Commissioners and the public, and asked members of the Commission to introduce themselves. Senator Marsden noted that due to the active state of emergency, this meeting is convening virtually, pursuant to Item 4-0.01 of the 2020 Appropriation Act. The Commission meeting is streaming for the public to view via the Virginia Senate streaming site.

#### **II. Approval of Commission on Youth 2021 Study Plans**

*Senator Dave Marsden, Chair*

Senator Marsden first gave an update on the Board of Education's work group to look at state operated programs (SOPs). Senator Marsden reminded Commission members that at the December 2020 meeting, the Commission on Youth approved a recommendation for the Board of Education to make recommendations on appropriate staffing and funding levels for SOPs, as well as any statutory and regulatory changes needed. Senator Marsden stated that he will be serving on the work group and will provide updates on its progress as it occurs.

Next, Senator Marsden introduced Amy Atkinson, Executive Director. Ms. Atkinson briefly summarized the 2021 study plans. The 2021 study plans under consideration are:

- Crossover Youth Information Sharing
- Workforce Development for Foster Care Youth
- Collection of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs

Senator Favola moved that the study plans be adopted. The motion was adopted unanimously.

### **III. Update on COVID-19's Impact on K-12 Education**

*James F. Lane, Ed. D., Superintendent of Public Instruction,  
Virginia Department of Education*

Senator Marsden next introduced Dr. James Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction, to present an update on COVID-19's impact on K-12 education in Virginia. Dr. Lane started his presentation by explaining the state action and support for schools, such as, providing interim guidance for reopening, as well as executive orders from the Governor on health, safety and regulatory waivers. Additionally, Dr. Lane gave an overview on the 2020 – 2021 school year on enrollment declines, patterns in virtual vs. in-person instruction at the local school divisions from September 2020 to April 2021, and survey data collected by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) on remote learning challenges.

Dr. Lane also presented information on the pandemic's health and academic impact on students. One example Dr. Lane gave is that Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener (PALS) screening tool data shows that a significantly higher number of kindergarten and first grade students are starting the school year at a higher risk for reading failure in comparison to last year. Dr. Lane also shared with the Commission that VDOE, with stakeholders, developed resources and best practices for school divisions on topics including equity, literacy and mathematics, remediation, assessments, data analysis, student and staff wellness, and technology to support instruction. Finally, Dr. Lane briefly reviewed the federal relief packages provided to the state of Virginia over the past year.

Following his presentation, Dr. Lane answered several questions from Commission members.

Dr. Lane and his team answered questions on the ways school districts will use to catch up students on learning loss, collecting data with regards to undetected learning needs, opting out of SOL testing, students missing other screening tests, credit recovery

coursework, geographic and socioeconomic makeup of students who opted out of in-person learning over the past year, and tracking literacy goals.

This presentation can be accessed on the Commission's webpage under the meetings tab.

#### **IV. Adjourn**

Senator Marsden asked for any remaining comments.

Commissioner Goldsmith shared with the group that the Virginia Higher Education Substance Use Advisory Committee (VHESUAC) completed its strategic plan recently, and Ms. Goldsmith requested to have a presentation at an upcoming Commission on Youth meeting.

Delegate Bell requested that the Commission receive a report on the most recent SOL report when it becomes available in the fall.

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

The video of this meeting can be found at the following link: [Meeting Video Archive](#).