Tab IX. Proposed Legislative Positions Amendments

- Previously adopted Legislative Positions remain in full effect from year to year. **No vote is necessary on Legislative Positions if no change is made.**

- Only changes to existing Legislative Positions (Amendments to add or delete language), or new Legislative Positions, are to be considered by the Delegate Assembly.

- When a proposed new legislative position, or proposed amendment, is removed from the "block" to be considered separately, **only the proposed changes are open to consideration/discussion.** It takes a 2/3 vote to suspend the rules to consider/discuss any part of a position not new or proposed for amendment.

- The explanation for and history of each position that is included in the official VSBA Handbook of Legislative Positions is omitted in this section. They are omitted because they are used for lobbying purposes and are not part of the position statement, nor subject to action by the Delegate Assembly.

- The full text of all current Legislative Positions are included in the Appendix.

3.3 Enrollment Cap for Virtual Virginia

Virginia's school divisions continue to face drastic budget cuts at both the state and local levels and are faced with the possibility of eliminating classes, especially Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

Technology and online courses such as Virtual Virginia can provide a cost-saving alternative for school divisions. Virtual Virginia (online course offerings) has a cap on the number of students in the Commonwealth that can enroll in its online courses. The enrollment cap in Virtual Virginia should be increased from its present capacity to accommodate more advanced students to participate in advanced courses in a cost-effective manner.

Rationale: Owing to continuing and drastic budget cuts, school divisions are faced with possibly eliminating classes, especially AP courses. It would be cost effective for VDOE to increase the enrollment cap in Virtual Virginia from its present capacity to accommodate more advanced students. Advanced students, in particular, would benefit from increased opportunities for college-bound courses, and increasing the opportunities for advanced courses would be cost effective for all parties.

Proposed New Legislative Position

4.22 Tax Relief for Teachers

The Virginia School Boards Association supports tax relief for teachers and requests that the General Assembly create a new Virginia Subtraction from Taxable Income Base of up to $750 (this is the amount above the federal amount to bring the total to $1,000). Virginia subtractions are defined in Virginia Code § 58.1-322.C "[t]o the extent included in federal gross adjusted income, there shall be subtracted:" Under 58.1-322-C is a list of subtractions 58.1-322.C.1-58.1-322.C.34.

Rationale: As budget cuts have created strains in schools throughout the country, many educators have opened their own wallets to make sure students continue to have the classroom resources they need. Virginia's teachers often spend several hundred dollars a year purchasing supplies for their classrooms, and this year the need was especially acute. As education budgets nationwide were slashed, educators were placed in the difficult position of needing to purchase more than ever for their classrooms, while still feeling the pinch of the recession themselves.

Proposed New Legislative Position

5.12 Unexpended Funds

Unexpended funds at the end of each fiscal year should be retained in the existing contingency fund line item, not subject to reappropriation as "new fiscal year" funds, instead of being returned to the local appropriating bodies.

Rationale: Currently, Virginia Code § 22.1-100 requires that any school board funds that are unexpended at the end of the fiscal year must be returned to the local appropriating body. Having the option of deciding to hold on to reversion funds would enhance the ability of school boards to enter into more long-range planning as well as provide boards the ability to maintain a reserve or contingency fund as a hedge against future budget shortfalls or emergencies. It would also encourage a culture of fiscal prudence, as school divisions would not be subject to the "use it or lose it" perception that now exists under the current statute.

Proposed New Legislative Position

9.14 Composite Index—Taxable Value of Property

The VSBA requests that the Commonwealth modify the Local Composite Index formula to use "Taxable Value of Property" in place of "Local True Value of Property."

Rationale: This change would reflect the actual tax base of localities which participate in the Land Use Value program. The current use of "Local True Values" penalizes counties which participate in the Land Use Program which is designed by the Commonwealth to support agriculture and forestry and preserve open space. The current LCI imposes a particularly difficult burden on rural counties in which agriculture is the main industry. In many of the 68 counties which participate in the Land Use Program, the Land Use (taxable) Value of property is less than 5% of the True Value on which the current LCI is based. The increasing burden this discrepancy creates is reflected in the current LCI in which many rural communities have higher ratings and therefore receive less support from the state. Those higher ratings are caused by the value of rural property increasing while land use values (the amount a farmer can receive for a crop or beef or milk) has remained the same or, in some cases, decreased. The result is that on paper the potential for a county to generate local tax dollars appears much higher than it is because taxes can only be collected on the land use values, not the "true value."

Proposed New Legislative Position

10.12 Gang-Free Zones

Gang-free zones should include 1) any school bus stop or property that is within 1,000 feet of a school bus stop during the time when students are waiting for the bus or are being dropped off, and 2) the property of any publicly owned community center, park, library, or hospital.

Rationale: Currently, Virginia Code § 18.1-46.3:3 enhances the penalty for criminal gang activity occurring on school property, school buses, or within 1,000 feet of school property. It is a logical extension of that statute to also include the so-called "gang-free zones" created by that statute to include school bus stops as well as publicly owned community centers, parks, libraries, and hospitals.

Tab X. Proposed Bylaws Change

Virginia School Boards Association
"Children Are Our Common Wealth"

PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE

October 1, 2010

TO: VSBA Delegate Assembly

FROM: Warren J. "Jeff" Bain, President

RE: Proposed Bylaws Change

The following VSBA Bylaws change is recommended as a result of a recent VSBA Audit. It was the auditors' opinion, based on standard accounting procedures and practices, that the Association would be better served with additional board member financial oversight. Upon hearing the report, the Executive Committee unanimously agreed that there is a need for this committee and directed staff to draft the proposed change. If the Bylaws change is approved a more detailed description of the committees' duties will be developed and added to the VSBA Governance and Policy Manual.

Rivanna Ridge Professional Building • 200 Hansen Road, Suite 2 • Charlottesville, Virginia 22911
(434) 295-8722 • Fax: (434) 295-8785 • Homepage: www.vsba.org

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ARTICLE XI.

Standing and Other Committees

Section 1. A Finance Committee consisting of at least five members will be appointed by the President to prepare and recommend to the Board of Directors the annual budget and make recommendations to the Board concerning the financial aspects of the Association.

Section 2. A Legislative Positions Committee consisting of at least one member from each VSBA region will be appointed by the President to solicit and review position proposals from member boards, preview and project future needs for legislation and recommend new or modified positions to the Board of Directors.

Section 3. A Federal Relations Committee consisting of at least one member from each of the Congressional Districts will be appointed by the President to serve as part of the NSBA-Federal Relations Network. The committee will provide a voice on the Board of Directors for those school divisions that have a substantial stake in federal funds/issues.

Section 4. An Audit Committee consisting of five board members will be appointed by the President. The Finance Committee Chairman will serve as chairman of the Audit Committee. The committee will oversee the annual financial statement audit.

Section 4 5. Special committees or task forces may be appointed by the President or by the Board of Directors to address issues of concern to the membership. Such committees/task forces may be established by the Delegate Assembly, the Board of Directors or the President.