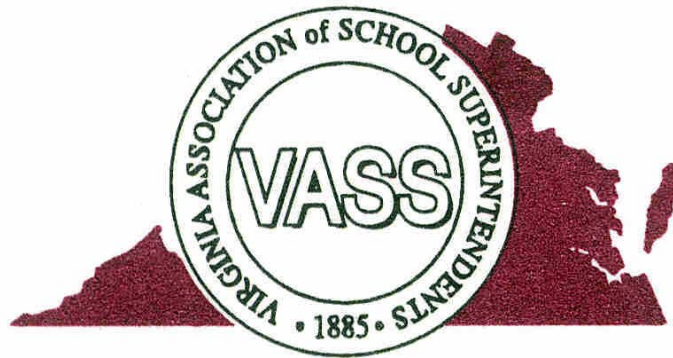


Virginia Association
of
School Superintendents



2008
Legislative
Policies

Governance

Local Role

1. **School Choice** 1993 adopted, 1995 adopted/amended
VASS supports “choice” within school districts and supports current standards and laws, which allow for flexibility within existing public school educational units and continue to be under the control of local school boards. Moreover, VASS supports a policy which would declare that relief granted to a particular educational unit in any school division would be available to all schools.
 - (a) VASS opposes “choice” outside school districts as prescribed in No Child Left Behind.

2. **Charter Schools Revised Proposed Position** 1999 adopted/amended
VASS supports monitoring any proposed changes to the current charter school legislation in order to assure that it continues to be limited to public schools in the Commonwealth and that local school boards retain authority and control over such schools.

3. **Parental Responsibility** 1996 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended
VASS supports parental involvement in all aspects of their children’s education but does not support a Constitutional amendment regarding the right of parents to direct the education of their children.

4. **Part-time Enrollment** 1997 adopted, 1998 adopted/amended, 2006 amended.
VASS favors continuation of present policy which allows local control over part-time enrollment of home and private school students in public schools, including the VHSL policy, which requires that a student be enrolled in 5 subjects, and pass 5 subjects.

5. **Calendar** 1994 adopted, 1995 adopted, 1996 adopted, 1997 adopted, 1998 adopted, 1999 adopted/amended, 2000 amended, adopted 2008

VASS supports returning control of the public school calendar to local school boards and supports local flexibility and control over opening dates to allow local boards to have time to provide for required remediation and teacher training.

6. **Graduation Requirements** 1996 adopted, 2000 adopted/amended
 - (a) VASS supports continuation of local initiatives to raise graduation requirements.

- (b) VASS supports the development of a Career Technical Diploma to recognize students whose achievement is in the area of technical education.

7. **Consolidation of Local Government Functions** 1997 adopted
VASS opposes legislation to mandate consolidation of local government and school division operations.

8. **Appropriation by Local Government** 1997 adopted, 2000 amended, 2006 amended.

- (a) VASS supports appropriation of school funds by local governing bodies on a lump sum basis over categorical basis.
- (b) VASS opposes local government boards using K-12 appropriations for any purpose other than education.

9. **Alternative Education** 1999 adopted, 2000 amended, 2002 Amended

VASS supports additional funding for alternative education and maintains that such funding should be the joint responsibility of the local school division and the state-funded alternative education programs. Local school divisions should receive expanded funding for elementary alternative education programs.

Local divisions should not be required to provide services to all students expelled or suspended without sufficient funding for programs, staff, and construction needs from the state.

State Role

1. **Standards of Quality; State and Local Support of Public Schools** 2002 Amended, Amended 2004, Amended 2005, amended 2006.

Standards of Quality designed to ensure an effective educational system of high quality throughout the Commonwealth shall be determined and prescribed every two years by the Board of Education, subject to revision only by the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall determine the manner in which funds are to be provided for the cost of maintaining an educational program meeting the prescribed Standards of Quality, and shall provide for the apportionment of the cost of such programs between the Commonwealth and the local units of government comprising such school divisions. Both the Commonwealth and the local units of government shall be obligated to fully fund their portion of such cost from taxes or from other available funds.

2. **Standards of Accreditation / Standards of Learning** 1996 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended, 1999 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended, 2001 Adopted/Amended, 2004 Amended, 2005 Amended

- (a) VASS opposes the concept of Standards of Learning becoming regulations.
- (b) VASS supports state policy whereby SOQ revision and approval by the General Assembly precede SOA revision by the State Board of Education.
- (c) VASS supports the idea of the Standards of Accreditation being approved only when funded by the General Assembly.
- (d) VASS supports a policy whereby the Board of Education would not adopt special education standards and regulations that exceed federal law and regulations
- (e) VASS supports the use of a growth model to determine accreditation.
- (f) VASS supports reporting high school credit end-of-course test scores at the high school regardless of the grade in which the test was taken.
- (g) VASS supports legislation that would permit multiple criteria to be used for school accreditation and graduation requirements.
- (h) VASS supports the continuation of the current Board of Education policy for awarding locally verified credit to students.

3. **Accountability** 1997 adopted, 2000 amended, 2005 Amended

- (a) The state should assume a role of support and direction rather than one of punitive enforcement in accountability and accreditation.
- (b) VASS believes that every shareholder should be responsible and accountable for both success and improvement. Shareholders include students, parents, local school boards, the Board of Education, and state and local governing bodies.

4. **Non-Prescription Drugs** 1999 adopted

VASS supports continuation of local school control over school discipline policies, including those dealing with non-prescription drugs.

5. **Freedom of Information** 1999 adopted

VASS supports legislation that enhances the ability of local school boards and administrators to conduct school business in an environment that protects the privacy of students and personnel records and other sensitive information.

6. **Student Internet Access** 1999 adopted

VASS supports allowing local school division policies to control student access to the Internet and the use of software to filter certain information.

7. **NCLB/IDEA (ESEA Reauthorization)** Adopted 2005, amended 2006, amended/adopted 2008

VASS supports the Elementary and Secondary Education Act's general goal of having all children lean to high standards but is deeply concerned about the Act's major expansion of federal authority over state and local educational programs as well as the huge costs required for non-Title 1 students to be carried by local funds in this program. VASS supports return of accountability to state and local authorities for ESEA, since Virginia has already demonstrated meaningful success with high standards and assessment. **If accountability is not returned to state authorities, then VASS will support the Act only if all of the revisions recommended by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and VASS are made in the law.**

- (a) Add both a clear promise to fully fund Title 1 of ESEA and Part B of IDEA and a clear path to full funding for Title 1 and IDEA.
- (b) Add real, valid, reliable and standards-based measure that accurately measure each student's actual starting point and growth over time. The value-added model

in the discussion draft improves the once-a-year-snapshot tests, but it is too weak to provide the rich diagnostic data on each individual student needed to bring all students to proficiency.

- (c) Settle the continuing conflict between IDEA and Title 1 of ESEA in favor of the individualized instruction and assessment required by IDEA in the following ways:
 - (i) Eliminate the arbitrary caps (1% ad 2%) on student assessment and add developmentally appropriate measures and assessments called for in the student's IEP; and
 - (ii) Include the IDEA mandate for services to high schools graduation or are 21 (up to 26 in some states) in the calculation of graduation rates.
- (d) Permit states to determine appropriate measures and assessments for English language learners based on state approved tests and the professional judgment of teachers and administrators.
- (e) Permit local school districts to implement formative and adaptive assessments that provide instant feedback to students, teachers, administrators and parents to guide individual instructional decisions, and include the local measures in the accountability system.
- (f) Count in AYP a student's passing score on all test retakes
- (g) Eliminate all plans, reports, audits and staffing mandates that research does not show improved achievement for low-income children.
- (h) Permit states greater latitude in selecting measures of achievement and program strength beyond the limited multiple measure options in the Miller/McKeon discussion draft.
- (i) Add a requirement for complete and immediate transparency for all state and federal plans, requests, guidance, policy letters and responses to state requests, and plans; eliminate sweetheart deals with some states and school districts; and eliminate violations of the Department of Education Organization Act through better and more regular Congressional oversight.
- (j) Sharpen the targeting of funds to school districts and schools where poverty is concentrated based on the percentage of such students.
- (k) Add more assistance and support for schools and school districts that miss Annual Measurable Objectives rather than punishments that do not improve student outcomes.

- (l) Eliminate the comparability requirement of equal per-pupil spending on teachers. The comparability calculation mistakenly equates salary with teacher quality. Because this is a new calculation, the cost spent gathering and analyzing data will be massive. This will generate a lot of new paperwork with no benefit to student achievement.
- (m) Either eliminate all teacher, administrator and paraprofessional credentialing requirements or restore the HOUSSE provisions in current law. Rural school districts have a particularly difficult time attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers and nearly all school districts have difficulty funding teachers in some areas, particularly special education, math, science and world languages.
- (n) Eliminating the proposed extension of the definition of school of origin in Subtitle B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to the child's high school graduation, and the proposed dispute resolution procedure. Students staying in a school district over several years will make friends and build relationships in the new district rather than a place a student lived several years ago, and school districts have dispute resolution processes in place under either local or state policy. A formal dispute resolution process is an invitation to litigation and attorney's fees where the additional cost and administrative oversight will not result in commensurate benefit for students.
- (o) Clarify the high school graduation rate calculation to include:
 - (i) special education students up to age 21 based on their transition plan developed as part of their IEP at age 16;
 - (ii) Students in alternative high schools who graduate from high school, even though it may take longer;
 - (iii) Students who achieve a high school diploma through an adult education class of GED; and
 - (iv) Students who have serious health problems or other issues that remove them from school for extended periods.

Educational Programs

1. **Program Offerings** 1995 adopted, 1996 adopted/amended 1997 adopted/amended, 1998 adopted/amended, 2001 Adopted/Amended

- (a) The SOA requirements should not restrict or limit opportunities currently available to challenge students. Choices should remain for students such as: the arts and humanities, health and P.E., career and technical education, including courses that serve to facilitate such programs as school-to-work transition.
- (b) The state must support fairness and equal opportunity for all students and the need for preservation of essential programs and personnel.
- (c) The state should recognize the many different strategies and program options which are, or could be, available to these students locally and provide adequate state funding for such alternative education programs.
- (d) VASS supports SOA that define and require instructional program offerings.
- (e) VASS supports allowing local school divisions to implement 4-year-old programs for “at risk” students identified as eligible in their division.

2. **Advanced Study Diploma** 1995 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended, 1998 adopted/amended

Diplomas should reflect the varied competencies of individual students who achieve higher standards beyond the SOA requirements as determined by the locality.

3. **Family Life** 1995 adopted, 1996 adopted/amended, 1997 adopted/amended, 1998 adopted/ amended, 2000 amended

VASS supports continuation of the present policy of “opt-out” for those students whose parents choose not to have them participate in certain Board of Education and General Assembly-approved programs, such as the Family Life Education program.

4. **Kindergarten** 1993 adopted, 1994 adopted/amended
VASS supports maintaining the current standards in the Code of Virginia relating to the admission of students to kindergarten and recommends that they not be altered.

5. **Pre-Kindergarten** 2002 Adopted, Approved 2008

VASS supports full funding for pre-kindergarten programs for children with established needs.

6. **Assessment** 1997 Adopted, 1998 Adopted/amended, 2002 Adopted/Amended, 2004 Amended
- (a) A responsible and comprehensive model of assessment should include:
 - (i) Assurance of valid reliable SOL and end-of-course tests
 - (ii) Alignment of the testing schedule with course completion
 - (iii) Establishment of valid cut scores supported by current research
 - (b) VASS supports higher academic standards for students in the Commonwealth and the programs and services that will enable all students to meet or exceed those standards.

Students

1. **Child Abuse & Neglect** 1993 adopted, 2001 Adopted/Amended
VASS supports the concept that the responsibility for investigating complaints of child abuse against school division employees be retained by local social service departments and school divisions.
2. **Drug Testing** 1996 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended
Opposes mandatory drug testing of students as well as requirements for public school personnel to conduct such testing.
3. **Compulsory School Attendance Age** 1999 Adopted
VASS supports a study of compulsory school attendance policy prior to considering any action to alter the present age policy.
4. **Driver's License Issuance and Revocation** 1999 Adopted
VASS supports the policy that school divisions not be involved in the issuance and revocation of drivers' licenses for students.
5. **School Board Authority**, 2004 Adopted
VASS supports the authority of local school boards granted in Article VIII, Section 7 of the Constitution to regulate firearms on school property and at school events.
6. **In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students**, 2005 Adopted

VASS supports legislation that would provide eligibility for in-state tuition to an undocumented student who meets the following criteria: graduated from a public or private high school in Virginia; resided in the Commonwealth for at least five years as of the date the individual graduated from high school; registered as an entering student in an institution of higher education; provided an affidavit to the institution that he/she has filed an application to become a permanent resident of the United States and is actively pursuing such permanent residency; and submitted evidence that he/she, or in the case of a dependent student, at least one parent, guardian or person standing in loco parentis, has paid Virginia income taxes for at least three years prior to the date of enrollment.

Support Programs

1. **Technology** 1996 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended, 1998 adopted/amended, 2002 Amended
 - (a) The state should provide all schools with direct unlimited access to voice, video, and data networks including the upgrading of infrastructure and internet access to enhance classroom instruction and assessment.
 - (b) All schools must have a 5-to-1 student-to-microcomputer ratio.
 - (c) All schools must have one-fifth of the computers upgraded each year on a textbook-type replacement cycle.
 - (d) All schools must have state funding for appropriate multi-media software.

2. **Transportation** 1997 adopted, 1998 adopted/amended, 2000 amended
 - (a) VASS opposes transportation services for private school students by public school buses and believes it is an inappropriate use of public funds.
 - (b) VASS supports current practices and funding for students whose disabilities require special transportation.

Personnel

1. **Technology Training** 1997 adopted, 1998 adopted/amended, 2000 amended
VASS supports state funding for ongoing technology training in order to comply with the State licensure requirements and the rapidly changing technology advancements and needs in schools.
2. **Binding Arbitration** 1993 adopted, 1995 adopted/amended, 1996 adopted/amended
 - (a) VASS supports current Code which prohibits binding arbitration.
 - (b) VASS supports current law which vests final authority in any case involving the grievance procedure with local school boards.
3. **Teacher Contracts** 1995 adopted, 1996 adopted/amended, 1997 adopted/amended, 1999 adopted/amended, 2002 Adopted/Amended

VASS supports the idea of term contracts for teachers and administrators and will monitor closely, bills relative to tenure, “incompetence,” and nonrenewal of teaching contracts.
4. **Grievance Procedures** 1991 adopted, 1992 adopted/amended, 1993 adopted/amended
VASS supports the present grievance procedure and opposes legislation that would add additional grievance actions, reprimands or other criticism placed in personnel files, the contents of any evaluation, transfer within the school division and reduction in force within the school division.
5. **Enhancement of Retirement Benefits** 1994 adopted, 2000 adopted/amended, 2002 Amended, 2004 Amended

VASS supports enabling school divisions to re-hire retired licensed personnel with no waiting period on a full-time basis with no loss of retirement benefits.
6. **School Health Issues** 1993 adopted, 1994 adopted/amended, 1995 adopted/amended, 1996 adopted/amended, 1997 adopted/amended, 1998 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended
 - (a) State funding to localities should be increased in order to begin to realistically serve those students requiring some form of health-related services during the year.

- (b) Current legislation, which prohibits school divisions from requiring teaching personnel to assist students in non-emergency health-related situation, should be reviewed for fiscal and other ramifications, and funded according to such review before localities are mandated to comply.
- (a) VASS supports a policy by which localities continue to determine how best to provide health services to students with the integral assistance and advice of local School Health Advisory Boards.
- (b) VASS opposes regulations or legislation that mandate use of licensed nurses as the only persons to give medication to children.

7. **Planning Time for Elementary Teachers** 1993 adopted

VASS supports the concept that local school divisions are capable of setting, monitoring and evaluating instructional schedules for school personnel. Planning time for teachers should be a local decision based on the local requirement and specific local schedule.

8. **Minimum Staffing Requirements** 1994 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended, 1998 adopted/amended, 1999 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended, 2002 Amended

- (a) VASS supports initiatives to add teaching personnel to elementary schools and requests that any such initiative be made flexible so that additional teachers can be employed in accordance with the needs of the local school divisions.
- (b) VASS supports Standards of Quality that define and require certain administrative, support, and instructional staffing levels.
- (c) VASS believes that minimum staffing requirements should be set in the Standards of Quality.
- (d) VASS supports increasing the minimum staffing requirements in the Standards of Quality through additional funding.

9. **Technology** 1993 adopted, 1997 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended, 2002 Amended, 2006 Amended

- (a) VASS supports technology resource assistants receiving a salary commensurate with the training and skills identified in the stated job description; however, it would not be necessary that they be certified teachers.
- (b) VASS supports a permanent funding for educational technology in the Standards of Quality beyond personal standard.

10. **Recruiting and Retaining Teachers and Administrators** 2000 adopted, 2002 Adopted/Amended, 2004 Amended, Amended 2008

- (a) VASS supports legislation to address the teacher and administrator shortage crisis. This legislation should include providing financial assistance to school divisions for recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and administrators.
- (b) VASS supports additional teacher education scholarships at \$6,000 per year for 4 years with a requirement that the loan be repaid with each year a teacher is employed in a school division in Virginia. Additionally, one half of the scholarship funds should be allocated to teachers majoring in special education, mathematics, and science and one-half of the scholarship funds should be allocated to teachers in all other major areas.
- (c) VASS supports funding stipends for mentors to meet their mentor program requirements.
- (d) VASS supports additional state funding to Virginia colleges and universities to expand the number of students enrolling in teacher education programs.
- (e) VASS supports expanding the number of slots and the funding for the career switcher program.
- (f) VASS supports increased funding for comprehensive staff development programs for teachers and administrators including full funding for national board certification.
- (g) VASS opposes State Board of Education proposals for licensure requirements which use “predetermined student pass rates or proficiency levels” in the evaluation of personnel.
- (h) VASS supports broadening the definition of mentoring in the Board of Education’s proposed requirements for licensure to include professional presentations, training programs for other educators, and teaching graduate classes for pre-service and in-service of educators.
- (i) VASS supports the inclusion of professional development activities and conferences sponsored by recognized professional organizations among the options for accrual of professional development points in the Board of Education’s proposed licensure requirements.
- (j) VASS supports the requirement for teaching experience for instructional leaders and potential instructional leaders seeking a Level I endorsement and agrees that it is essential to a school leader’s effectiveness. VASS supports a candidate seeking the same endorsement through an alternative route having the same requirement.

Funding

1. General 1993 adopted, 1996 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended, 2002 Adopted/Amended, Amended 2005, amended 2006, Amended 2008

VASS supports increased state funding for all school divisions,

- (a) VASS supports increasing salaries and benefits of all teachers, administrators, and superintendents so that Virginia will be in the top 10% in the nation.
- (b) The maximum composite index value should be monitored to assure equity among all school divisions.
- (c) VASS supports efforts to review the Standards of Quality (SOQ) to reflect the actual educational practices of local school divisions.
- (d) VASS supports efforts to change funding for elementary and secondary education in the Commonwealth to reflect true costs incurred by school divisions in meeting the requirements of the Standards of Quality (SOQ), the Standards of Accreditation (SOA), and the Standards of Learning (SOL).
- (e) VASS supports efforts to ensure that the funding formula reflects current costs to meet state requirements that have been added since the formula was last revised.
- (f) VASS supports efforts to ensure that the funding formula reflects educational practices that go beyond the requirements of the Standards of Quality but are needed because they constitute best practices that benefit all children.
- (g) VASS supports efforts to expand positions and funding under the SOQ to reflect actual education practices in school divisions.
- (h) VASS supports efforts to expand state and federal revenue to fully fund mandates (i.e., IDEA)
- (i) VASS supports efforts to close the disparity gap in funding between wealthy and poor school divisions.
- (j) VASS supports efforts to provide competitive salaries and benefits which will retain quality education employees in the profession and which will attract and retain new personnel of high caliber.
- (k) VASS supports efforts to grant localities the authority to utilize additional revenue sources other than property taxes.

- (l) VASS supports efforts to dedicate a portion of the state's annual individual income tax collections for return to Virginia's localities for the purpose of broadening their revenue base and reducing their dependence on real property taxation.
 - (m) VASS supports exclusion of all federal deduct funds in the re-benchmarking of the SOQ process
 - (n) VASS supports the revision of the current transportation reimbursement in Basic Aid to reflect the current cost of fuel.
2. **State Funding Formulas** 1996 adopted, 1998 adopted/amended, 2001 Adopted/Amended
- (a) VASS supports the adoption of JLARC recommendations for funding to school divisions.
 - (b) VASS supports full funding for the General Assembly's minimum foundation school finance program for K-12 public education.
3. **Alternative Education/Drop-Out Prevention** 1997 adopted, 2000 adopted/amended 2001 Adopted/Amended, 2005 Amended
- (a) VASS supports continued of funding for dropout programs.
 - (b) VASS supports continued and additional funding for at-risk students, to include remedial education SOQ funding, at-risk SOQ funding, funding for reduced K-3 class size, at-risk 4-year-old funding, and technology funding.
 - (c) VASS supports continued funding for alternative education as well as additional alternative education sites, to provide reasonable and adequate access to all school divisions.
 - (d) VASS supports expanding funding to all school divisions for elementary alternative education programs.
4. VASS strongly urges the General Assembly to change certain funding practices including:
- (a) The practice since 1992 of providing only half year raises and in some years raises for selected employees.
 - (b) The practice of manipulating VRS rates to suit a budget that has resulted in a huge shortage in the teacher retirement fund over the next twenty years.
 - (c) The practice of budgeting the SOQ to suit revenue rather than funding the Standards as required by the Constitution. Examples include setting the rate of

inflation, creating and now not funding the linear weighted average for teacher salaries, and creating deduct from rebenchmarking such as federal funds and local revenue.

- (d) The practice of using Literary Fund profits to pay the state share of teacher retirement.
- (e) The practice of declaring some Lottery Profits as excess.
- (f) The practice of rebenchmarking on the basic of expenditures by divisions that are two years old, when more up-to-date figures should be available.
- (g) Others that VASS members may want to add.

5. **Tuition Credits/Vouchers** 1999 adopted/amended, Amended/Adopted 2008

- (a) VASS supports the position that public tax dollars for K-12 public education should be spent only on K-12 public schools
 - (i) VASS opposes tuition tax credits, scholarships, vouchers, and other like attempts to divert funds from K-12 public education.
- (b) VASS supports requesting the Attorney General ruling on the constitutionality of voucher and tuition tax credit legislation as proposed in SB 544 and SB 545 in the 2006 Session if such legislation were to be enacted into law.

7. **Special Purposes** 1997 adopted, 1999 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended, 2002 Amended, 2004 Amended, 2006 amended

- (a) VASS supports an initiative that requires unbudgeted lottery profits to be used for one or all of the following: technology in public and schools, and the Literary Fund.
- (b) VASS supports a policy that would the same payment per pupil from private school students to a summer Governor's School as that required for public school students in the same division.
- (c) Reading specialist and math specialist for elementary schools, who assist in early intervention and continued progress in these most important areas of reading and math, should be recognized as critical to student success and, therefore should receive state funding.
- (d) The state should include in its funding figures transportation costs for state and local programs in its funding formula.

- (e) VASS supports permanent funding from the state for technology and technology resource assistants in each year of the biennium. Include funding for technology needs as a part of commitment to students.
 - (f) VASS requests the General Assembly provide funding to local school divisions to employ the additional personnel necessary to coordinate the testing that will be required as a result of the revisions to the Virginia Standards of Accreditation.
8. School Construction 1998 adopted, 1999 adopted/amended, 2000 adopted/amended, 2002 Adopted/Amended
- (a) A program of state participation in school construction and renovation projects should be implemented in addition to current Literary Fund and VPSA programs, school construction grants and lottery proceeds programs.
 - (b) Sufficient funding should be provided for the Literary Loan program to meet construction requests within one year.
 - (c) The state should address the financial condition of the Literary Fund and should always balance the general fund without using the proceeds of the Literary Fund to balance the Budget, especially by paying the state share of teacher retirement with such monies.
 - (d) The state should continue the VPSA subsidy sales until the Literary Fund is available to meet school construction needs
 - (e) The state should expand the ability of school divisions to borrow with state assistance.
 - (f) The Literary Fund should be available to all school divisions.
 - (g) The General Assembly should expand the ability of the school divisions to borrow through expanding the capacity of VPSA.
 - (h) The state should share debt service as ongoing, unfunded operational expenses.
 - (i) Debt service should not be part of the state-funding match.
 - (j) The state shall fund construction and renovation costs associated with state mandates (e.g. reduced class sizes, 4-Year old programs, etc.)
 - (k) The state should explore new sources of revenue for the Literary Fund.
 - (l) Expand the ability of school divisions to borrow by:

- (i) Removing the present composite index cap and raising the minimum balance of the Literary Fund and
 - (ii) Expanding the capacity of VPSA to include providing additional staff and funding to make short-term moneys available to school divisions awaiting approval of Literary Fund loans
- (m) VASS supports the state's provision of a permanent funding source for school construction to meet local building and maintenance needs.
 - (n) VASS supports efforts to include funding for technology needs as a part of the basic aid commitment to students.
 - (o) VASS supports efforts to provide additional funding to assist school divisions in building new schools and refurbishing existing schools.
 - (p) VASS supports efforts to close the gap between actual cost of programs and facilities and existing state funding.
 - (q) VASS opposes the continued use of the Literacy Fund for purposes other than school construction.

9. **Maintenance** 1998 adopted, 2002 Amended

- (a) The General Assembly should restore the per pupil allocation for maintenance supplement to a realistic level.
- (b) The General Assembly should establish the Maintenance Reserve Fund as a yearly obligation that is available to every school division.

10. **Technology** 1998 adopted

- (a) Establish a funding mechanism for technology initiatives of the General Assembly by:
 - (i) Short-term financial package to fund infrastructure support needed for such initiatives and
 - (ii) Adopting technology standards in SOQ to drive funding.
- (b) An acknowledgment of the real cost of implementing the technology initiative should be recognized by the state including not only the purchase of equipment,

software, and infrastructure, but also maintenance, technology training and technology resource teachers.

- (c) Flexible block grants should be provided annually to meet equipment, software, and training needs on the technology plan.
- (d) The state should consider the building/renovation implications in technology funding initiatives.

11. **Teacher & Administrator Salaries** 1999 adopted, 2001 Adopted/Amended, 2002 Amended

- (a) VASS supports increasing salaries and benefits of all teachers, administrators, and superintendents so that Virginia will be in the top 10% of the nation.
- (b) VASS supports the General Assembly funding 12-month raises using the linear weighted average and real inflation figures derived from annual reports from the divisions.

12. **Health Services** 1999 adopted, 2004 Amended

VASS supports additional state funding for health services commensurate with the needs of students and requirements of the state.

13. **4 Year-Old-At-Risk Program** 1999 adopted, 2001 Adopted/Amended, 2006 amended

- (c) VASS supports the state share of funding all students eligible to participate in the 4 Year-Old At-Risk Program.
- (d) VASS supports state funds being used for private four year old education only through contracts with local school boards.

14. **Remediation Funds** 1999 adopted

VASS supports additional funding for remediation programs to assist school divisions in meeting the Standards of Learning and Standards of Accreditation requirements.

14. **School Safety Resource Officers** 1999 adopted

VASS strongly supports state funding for school safety resource officers in school buildings.

15. **VRS Rates**

VASS supports the General Assembly's adoption of a VRS rate that pools the teacher and state employee actuarial certifications for 2006-08. The state shall pay the composite index share of the rate adopted for teachers in the Appropriation Act.

16. **SOQ Revisions** Adopted 2005

VASS supports full funding for future revisions to SOQ which have additional cost implications for local school divisions.

17. VASS opposes use of any inflation factor other than the Department of Labor's CPI in the rebenchmarking process.

18. VASS opposes any increase in the federal deduct in the rebenchmarking process.

(a) VASS supports the General Assembly fully funding the rebenchmarking of the SOQ so the standards are "realistic in relation to the Commonwealth's current education needs and practices.

19. **At-Risk Programs for Achievement** 2008 adopted

Based on the findings of its recent survey and the original rationale from the Wilder Disparity Commission, VASS supports increased funding for at-risk programs in order to reduce the dropout rate, increase graduation rates, lessen the burden on local governments to incur the costs of such programs, and reduce the disparity to offer such programs served across the Commonwealth