

LEGISLATIVE POLICY BRIEF

...from
THE THOMAS JEFFERSON INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Where Do Virginia's School Boards Stand On Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance?

10/4/2011 – Study after study have repeatedly demonstrated that the most important feature in improving student performance is the quality of the teacher.

That's why "improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance" was a key component of the Obama Administration's *Race to the Top* grant program. As part of the grant application, states and local school systems (Local Education Agencies, or LEAs) were asked to establish methods to reward quality teachers and principals based on their performance as educators in raising student achievement.

Local Education Agencies were asked to agree to design evaluation systems, with teacher and principal involvement, that took into account student growth as a significant factor (not the only factor). They were asked to agree to conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals and to use these evaluations as a factor to help teachers in professional development, and in making decisions about compensation, promotion and retention of teachers.

The *Race to the Top* application had several components. Each local School Board in Virginia was required to decide whether to participate in each component, including the one improving teacher effectiveness based on performance. The idea – inspired by a Democratic national administration – is similar to the idea currently promoted by Republican Governor Bob McDonnell.

Each School Board president and school division superintendent was required to sign off on what their local board had, or had not agreed to. As a consequence, the application is a reasonable surrogate for support or opposition of so-called "pay for performance." Here, Virginia citizens can view how their local School Board voted on the issue and answer the question: "Does my School Board support rewarding teacher quality based on teacher effectiveness?" Since individual local Board members may have voted yes or no, citizens will have to consult their local school division offices and request a copy of the vote.

A copy of the *Race to the Top* summary may be found here:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/school_finance/arra/competitive/race_to_the_top_application_documents/summary_application.pdf.

Great Teachers and Leader Selection Criteria

From the Virginia Race To The Top Application (January 15, 2010), pp 19-20, 24-30
And Summary, pp. 13-18

(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs, has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet annual targets to ensure that participating LEAS –

- (i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growthⁱ and measures it for each individual student;
- (ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement;
- (iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; and
- (iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding –
 - a. Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;
 - b. Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principalsⁱⁱ to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;
 - c. Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and
 - d. Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

School System	(D)(2) (i)	(D)(2) (ii)	(D)(2) (iii)	(D)(2) (iv)(a)	(D)(2) (iv)(b)	(D)(2) (iv)(c)	(D)(2) (iv)(d)
Accomack County							
Albemarle County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Alexandria City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Allegheny County							
Amelia County	Y						
Amherst County							
Appomattox County				Y			
Arlington County							
Augusta County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	y
Bath County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bedford County							
Bland County							
Botetourt County	Y						
Bristol City							
Brunswick County	Y		Y				
Buchanan County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Buckingham County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Buena Vista City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Campbell County	Y	Y					
Caroline County		Y	Y	Y			
Carroll County							
Charles City County							
Charlotte County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Charlottesville City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Chesapeake City	Y						
Chesterfield County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Clarke County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Colonial Beach Town							
Colonial Heights City	Y						
Covington City							
Craig County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Culpeper County	Y						
Cumberland County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Danville City							
Dickenson County							
Dinwiddie County							
Essex County							
Fairfax County	Y						
Falls Church City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fauquier County							
Floyd County							
Fluvanna County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Franklin City	Y						
Franklin County	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Frederick County		Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Fredericksburg City							
Galax City	Y						
Giles County							
Gloucester County							
Goochland County	Y		Y	Y			
Grayson County	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Greene County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Greensville County	Y	Y					
Halifax County	Y	Y	Y				
Hampton City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hanover County							
Harrisonburg City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Henrico County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Henry County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Highland County	Y						
Hopewell City	Y	Y	Y				

Isle of Wight County	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y
King George County				Y			
King William County							
King and Queen County							
Lancaster County							
Lee County							
Lexington City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Loudoun County							
Louisa County							
Lunenburg County	Y		Y	Y			
Lynchburg City	Y						
Madison County							
Manassas City							
Manassas Park City							
Martinsville City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mecklenburg County	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y
Middlesex County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Montgomery County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Nelson County							
New Kent County							
Newport News City							
Norfolk City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Northampton County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Northumberland County	Y		Y				
Norton City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Nottoway County	Y			Y	Y	Y	Y
Orange County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Page County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Patrick County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Petersburg City							
Pittsylvania County							
Poquoson City							
Portsmouth City							
Powhatan County							
Prince Edward County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Prince George County							
Prince William County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pulaski County	Y						
Radford City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Rappahannock County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Richmond City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Richmond County							
Roanoke City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Roanoke County							
Rockbridge County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	y

Rockingham County	Y		Y	Y		Y	Y
Russell County	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Salem City	Y	Y	Y	Y			Y
Scott County	Y	Y		Y			
Shenandoah County	Y	Y		Y			
Smyth County							
Southampton County	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Spotsylvania County							
Stafford County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Staunton City		Y					
Suffolk City							
Surry County							
Sussex County							
Tazewell County							
Virginia Beach City	Y						
Warren County	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Washington County	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Waynesboro City	Y		Y	Y	Y		
West Point Township							
Westmoreland County							
Williamsburg-James City County							
Winchester City	Y						
Wise County	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Wythe County	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
York County							

ⁱ **Student growth** means the change in *student achievement* for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. **Student achievement** means: (a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act); and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, providing they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and (b) For **non-tested grades and subjects**: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

ⁱⁱ **Highly effective teacher** means a teacher whose students achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA.

Highly effective principal means a principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve high rates (*e.g.*, one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates; college enrollment rates; evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement; or evidence of attracting, developing, and retaining high numbers of effective teachers.