



Proposed Legislative Priorities for the 2016 General Assembly

Legislative Topic	Charlottesville City School Board Position
Top Four Priorities	
Credit Accommodations for ELL Students	<p>The Charlottesville City School Board supports English Language Learners (ELL) students receiving the same opportunity for credit accommodations for graduation as Students with Disabilities (SWD). All students are allowed to have locally awarded verified credits (LVAC) in the areas of social studies and science when the tests in these areas have been taken at least twice and a score between 375 and 399 has been achieved. In the 2013 General Assembly session this option was added for Students with Disabilities in the areas of English and Math. This option has allowed students experiencing documented learning challenges due to disabilities to experience success by meeting similar standards to students without disabilities. The Charlottesville City School Board believes that English Language Learners deserve the same option. Often these students come from very adverse conditions and are expected to achieve at the same levels as students born and raised in the US. It is recommended that this option be allowed for any student who enters this country as an ELL after grade 5. For students entering in elementary grades (K-5), the standard verified credits would be required.</p> <p>To illustrate this concern, in 2013-14 CHS had 11 ELL students who did not graduate due to scores between 375 and 399 in reading or math. There were scores in this range for science and social studies but LAVC could be an option in these areas. Of these 11 in reading and math, eight were absent fewer than 10 days showing they were diligent in working toward the completion of the requirements for the course.</p>
Early Childhood Developmental Programs and Funding for At-Rick Three-and Four-Year Olds	<p>The Charlottesville City School Board supports the following in regards to Early Childhood Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an amendment to the state budget that would eliminate any inequities regarding the state program for Three-and Four-Year-Olds. • in the absence of full funding for early childhood programs; the state should pay particular attention to minimizing both program start-up costs (including facilities costs) and any required local match for localities. • the flexibility to allocate Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) funding for 3-year-old programs.
SOQ Funding	<p>The Charlottesville City School Board supports a review and update of the SOQ funding formula to ensure that it reflects the actual costs and needs of providing quality education to our students. This includes meeting the increased SOL and SOA requirements set by the State Board of Education.</p>
Accountability Impact of Group Homes/Foster Care Placements	<p>While the fiscal impact of group homes and foster care placements was addressed in the 2014 General Assembly, the Charlottesville City School</p>

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	<p>Board supports further consideration that students in these placements have a different status for accountability and/or assessment purposes. It is requested that students who are placed in group homes or foster care placements for short-term placements and leave that placement in localities such as Charlottesville without re-enrolling in their home jurisdiction, not be counted in Charlottesville’s dropout rate. It is recommended that the dropout designation, if the student does not re-enroll in the home jurisdiction, be assigned to the home jurisdiction. Additionally since many of these placements are for less than one semester and/or attendance is often sporadic, it is requested that assessment scores be assigned as a Special Situation (8888) if the student does not qualify as a transfer student under the accounting rules for assessment.</p>
Instruction and Accountability	
Single Letter Statewide Grading Scale for Evaluating Individual School Performance	The Charlottesville City School Board opposes the statewide A-F grading system and requests that all legislation requiring this system for individual schools be repealed.
Assessment Reform and Accountability Reform	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the work of the SOL Innovation committee in identifying and implementing a revised balanced assessment model which could include the Standards of learning (SOL) tests; College and Work Readiness Assessment (CWRA); student portfolios; problem-based projects; collaborative presentations; and community review of the student projects/research studies.
SOL Assessments	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the reduction of mandated Standards of Learning assessments to only those required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
SOL Administration	The Charlottesville City School Board supports expanded flexibility with the timing of administration of Standards of Learning tests to document more fully the period in which students have mastered “competency-based” learning standards and are able to accelerate into higher levels of content.
STEM Model for the Commonwealth	The Charlottesville City School Board requests the Charlottesville Lab School at Buford and the Sigma Lab at Charlottesville High School continue to be promoted as models within the Commonwealth of Virginia by our local legislators. This exposure and visibility could become a catalyst for additional funding and other opportunities for Charlottesville City Schools.
Best Practices and PD	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the need for added resources and expertise to provide professional development, disseminate models and support collaboration to help educators implement high-quality systems of assessment to support instruction.
CTE Credentials	The Charlottesville City School Board supports establishing varied pathways for students to earn credits toward graduation and/or CTE credentials. This would allow for a more individualized path to achieving a Career and College ready designation at the secondary level.
Budget and Funding	
Educational Technology Funding	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the Commonwealth taking a leadership role in developing a technology funding formula that will provide predictable and continuing revenue for the acquisition,

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	maintenance and replacement of educational technology, and for support personnel to train and assist in the use of educational technology. The state should also fund the implementation of the extensive data collection, cleansing, warehousing, tracking and reporting requirements, placed on the Virginia Department of Education and local school divisions by assessment and accountability mandates, including the Virginia Standards of Accreditation Program and the federal ESEA. Such funding should be included in the Standards of Quality.
Support for Private Education, Vouchers, and Tax Credits	The Charlottesville City School Board opposes any federal or state voucher and tuition tax credit legislation and any legislation that would provide vouchers or tuition tax credits for elementary and secondary private and home-schooled students. The Charlottesville City School Board also opposes measures that require the transfer of local taxpayer funds to other jurisdictions or to private providers should a student choose to enroll in a virtual program outside of their home school division.
Funding for Model Virtual Education Programs	The Charlottesville city School Board proposes that the General Assembly adopt legislation establishing a Pilot Model Virtual Learning Program to provide support and grant funded incentives for local school divisions in Virginia to offer innovative K-12 virtual education programs which could serve as models for programs in other school divisions.
Legislation with Fiscal Impact to School Boards	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the full funding of all mandates passed by the General Assembly. The partial funding or absence of funding for these mandates results in an added burden on local school budgets. An example would be a salary increase provided for employees. Funding received from the General Assembly generally covers positions within the SOQ while to treat all employees fairly, local funding would be required.
SOQ Support Position Cap	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the removal of the SOQ Support Position Cap to more accurately reflect current practice in local school divisions. The cap has become permanent following a temporary reduction during the recession.
SOA Funding	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the funding of all positions identified in the Standards of Accreditation. The State Board has identified several positions as needed but no funding has been provided. School divisions that are already funding these positions with local funds should have the flexibility to use any new state funding for other positions.
Lottery Funding	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the restoration of lottery funding for its original purpose of supporting construction and supplementing state SOQ funding.
VRS Funding	The Charlottesville City School Board supports the allocation of funding to restore the VRS funding levels prior to the recession.
Student Services	
Non-Public School Students Participating in Virginia High School League Activities	The Charlottesville City School Board opposes non-public school students' participation in Virginia High School League (VHSL) activities.
Safe and Healthy Learning Environment	The Charlottesville City School Board supports continued efforts between local school divisions with state and federal agencies to provide appropriate prevention and intervention programs that are effective in

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	<p>addressing violence and the precursors to violence in the school community. Therefore the Board supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ teacher preparation program expansions to include course work and practical experience in handling school violence and related issues ▪ funding of full-time school nurses for schools ▪ guidance to support local school division efforts to achieve strong, fair and consistent disciplinary expectations and application of consequences to all students ▪ sufficient funds to the School Resource Office Grants Program that each middle and high school may choose whether or not to employ uniformed officers in their schools, as well as additional peer mediation, conflict resolution, character education and other proactive initiatives appropriate for individual school communities ▪ legislation which would afford greater protection to students, employees and volunteers who are exposed to bodily fluids which put them at risk of dangerous infectious diseases <p>Additionally, the School Board opposes legislation requiring the designation of school personnel to carry concealed weapons in schools.</p>
Childhood Obesity	<p>The Charlottesville City School Board supports continued attention to the issue of childhood obesity in Virginia’s public schools. Any such consideration should include the collection and dissemination of best practices for nutrition, physical activity, and sleep which may help combat childhood obesity; but which allow local school divisions to retain flexibility in how they address this problem through local wellness policies as opposed to state mandates.</p>
Educational Employment	
Fact-Finding Panel for Grievances/Dismissals	<p>The Charlottesville City School Board supports a change in the 2013 legislation regarding the grievance/dismissal procedure that would allow an option for school boards to utilize a three-member Fact-Finding Panel or a hearing officer. Currently, as a result of the 2013 General Assembly, a hearing officer must be appointed for all grievance/dismissal proceedings.</p>
Statewide Health Insurance Option	<p>The Charlottesville City School Board supports study and consideration of local school divisions having the option to participate in the state employee health insurance program. It has been estimated that having the option may save local school divisions significant funding that could be utilized for educational program.</p>