Topic: Report on the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Early Childhood Education Grant Awarded to the Virginia Board of Education

Presenter: Mr. Mark R. Allan, Director of Elementary Instructional Services

Telephone Number: 804-786-3925  E-Mail Address: Mark.Allan@doe.virginia.gov

Origin:

X Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

____ Board review required by

_____ State or federal law or regulation

_____ Board of Education regulation

_____ Other: 

____ Action requested at this meeting  ____ Action requested at future meeting: ________ (date)

Previous Review/Action:

X No previous board review/action

____ Previous review/action
date __________________________
action __________________________

Background Information:

Virginia has built a strong foundation of preschool programs for at-risk four-year-olds and is ready to increase the quality of these comprehensive learning environments. On May 1, 2006, the Virginia Board of Education submitted a proposal to the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) for a state planning grant on early childhood education. NASBE has recognized Virginia’s commitment to early childhood education and has awarded this $15,000 grant to the Virginia Board of Education. In addition to Virginia, five other states received grant awards: Georgia, Indiana, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oregon.

Summary of Major Elements

The funds from the NASBE early childhood grant will be administered under the auspices of the board in support of a three-year project. The project requires the board to commit to a team approach, establish ongoing collaborative partnerships, attend a planning conference, and develop and implement a work plan that advances the project outcomes. The project team should be composed of representatives from each of the following: 1) state board of education, 2) higher education, 3) community colleges, 4) the state department of education, and 5) the department of health and human services.
The following primary outcomes have been established by the board to improve quality learning environments for preschool children in Virginia:

1. Identify and create a plan to increase the number of licensed preschool teachers and qualified teaching assistants that addresses recruitment, preparation, and ongoing professional development; and

2. Establish research-based guidelines that provide a shared language to school divisions as they develop, select, and evaluate preschool curriculum that aligns with Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

No action is requested. This report is for informational purposes only.

**Impact on Resources:**

The funding from the grant will support the activities required.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

Within the next few weeks, the board will return the signed Memorandum of Understanding to NASBE. The NASBE grant state team will assemble in July or August to review and discuss the state’s proposal. The grant team will also attend the NASBE planning session in Alexandria on August 17-18, 2006, to determine timelines, and other requirements for implementation of the grant activities during the next three years.