



2020 Human Development & Education Policy Statement

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I. Human Development

The strength of our communities determines the strength of our democracy. Emotional, social, and economic poverty weakens the fabric of our society and threatens our democracy. Policy leaders must ensure access to opportunities and invest the proper resources necessary for all children to grow up in nurturing surroundings, and to reconnect and strengthen the bonds of individuals and institutions in communities so that they thrive and favorably compete in the global economy.

A Platform for Children & Families

VML endorses the National League of Cities' Platform for Children and Families that recognizes that strong communities are built on a foundation of strong families and neighborhoods. VML supports and encourages efforts by our communities and the state that emphasize:

- Opportunities to learn and grow: Family literacy programs, quality out-of-school time programs and early childhood programs.
- Safe neighborhoods to call home: sufficient state support for local law enforcement, juvenile justice, and prisoner re-entry programs.
- Healthy lifestyles & environment: improving access to healthy foods, physical activity and recreation programs.
- Financially fit families: workforce development, curbing predatory lenders, and increasing access to low-cost bank accounts and mainstream financial services.

VML supports approaches (such as the Virginia Grocery Incentive Fund as one example) to provide financial and technical support for businesses to help expand and ensure greater access to healthy food for residents of the state.

Intergovernmental Issues & Funding

Federal, state and local governments share the same citizens and same taxpayers. Local governments request a restoration of a meaningful and fiscally balanced intergovernmental partnership in human services and education.

A working partnership.

- The federal and state governments should allow local governments maximum flexibility in developing and funding public/private partnerships to address human service needs.
- Local government must be a partner with the state and federal government in the process of developing regulations, policies, and allocation methods.
- The State should require interagency review of regulations to reconcile existing conflicts and to avoid duplication or conflict among agencies.
- The State should share data with communities and build a comprehensive human services data base to promote greater planning coordination and evaluation of services.

Funding commitments. Human services funding formulae should reflect identified needs, adequate resources to meet those needs, and not pit localities against each other. Equity in funding cannot be achieved by simply redistributing insufficient existing state aid among jurisdictions.

Cost shifting and unfunded mandates. VML opposes the

imposition of new federal or state requirements without the funding to pay for them. In the case of state mandates, as the state reduces its funding and assistance to localities, it must ease or eliminate requirements it is unwilling to support. In the case of federal mandates, the state must at the very least maintain its share of responsibility for program supervision and funding. For example:

- funding the administration of the FAMIS eligibility and case management;
- paying the cost of federal penalties when the state does not meet its obligations for human services programs, including adequate administrative funding, technology, training, and technical assistance necessary to properly do the job;
- maintaining state funding for the costs for federally mandated and state-supervised programs such as adoption assistance, and
- restoring the state funding ratio for local welfare administrative costs, in which the state pays 80 percent and the localities pay 20 percent.

Aging Services

Community programs. As alternatives to institutionalized care wherever appropriate, the state should develop Medicaid waivers or otherwise fully fund community-based programs like companion services, respite care, homemaker services, adult group homes and adult day care for the elderly.

Housing. The state should support policies that increase the affordability and availability of senior housing throughout the Commonwealth.

Opioids, Heroin, Synthetic Drugs

VML supports an intergovernmental and interdisciplinary partnership to address the epidemic of opioid and heroin overdoses in Virginia. Further, VML urges the federal government to actively address the public health threats posed by any emerging synthetic drugs that pose a similar addiction/overdose threat.

VML supports the Commonwealth's policy framework that targets the following:

1. Prevention – reduction in the supply of legal opiates, and tracking and reduction of the supply of illegal opiates such as heroin and synthetic substances;
2. Harm reduction – active intervention until treatment is available and accepted;
3. Treatment – for those who are addicted, and support/recovery resources for family members of people in treatment; and
4. Culture change – discourage use/overuse of legal opioids, change pain management expectations, and remove stigma regarding addiction treatment and recovery.

Behavioral Health

Planning for the future of the community & facility system. Any plan for the future of the publicly funded behavioral health and developmental services system should include adequate state funding for:

- A community-based, comprehensive system of care;
- Urgent care needs in each community, including crisis intervention teams (CIT);
- Accessibility to inpatient beds and crisis services on a regional basis, potentially through public-private partnerships,

to decrease the need for long-distance transports to access needed services for critical care;

- Comprehensive services and supports for people returning to the community from any type of state facilities (public safety as well as behavioral health), as well as for people diverted from state facilities.
- Children's mental health services, including community-based early interventions and the Mental Health Initiative;
- Medicaid waivers to eliminate service waiting lists; and
- Availability of services for consumers voluntarily seeking treatment services, regardless of their ability to pay.

Further, VML supports Community Services Boards (CSBs) as the single point-of-entry into the publicly funded system of care and as a choice for services to individuals and families.

Any restructuring plan should assure the following:

- Local flexibility in planning and service provision, particularly for local-only funds;
- No changes in the local match that would increase the burden on local taxes and budgets;
- Meaningful consultation with local officials and community services boards regarding strategies and funding proposals for publicly funded services;
- Sufficient time and opportunity for public comment on any legislative proposals;
- Strategies to overcome past de-institutionalization errors, particularly the shifting of the burden of care to communities;
- Strategies to discourage the concentration of consumers in facility communities and in urban centers; and
- State facilities are not so drastically reduced in size and scope that the potential for inpatient care is effectively eliminated.

Part C early intervention. VML urges the General Assembly to assure full state funding for infants and toddlers eligible for therapeutic services under Part C of IDEA to improve their school readiness and quality of life.

Behavioral health services for youth funding. The state should build upon its funding and seek federal-state funded waivers to provide behavioral health services, particularly prevention services for youth. VML supports greater state funding to the Mental Health Initiative and other community-based initiatives to diagnose and serve children with behavioral health needs early, to prevent more complex, costly, and restrictive interventions from CSA or the juvenile justice system.

Treatment beds. The state has greatly decreased state facility beds and state-funded services for children, including those with long-term or hard-to-treat conditions, and those in the state and local juvenile detention system. VML urges the state to continue its support of the Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents as a part of the array of behavioral health services, and to fund treatment beds for those committed to the juvenile justice system. Further, the state should fund supportive services for children leaving treatment and their families to further stabilize their living situations and allow for recovery.

Service capacity. VML encourages the state to establish a children's behavioral health workforce development initiative to build service capacity throughout the state.

Medicaid accountability and quality of care. The league encourages adequate state oversight of, and accountability for, community-level services funded by Medicaid, whether those services are furnished through private or public providers.

Behavioral health standards for jails. The 2019 General Assembly approved legislation directing the Board of Corrections to draft standards to address health and behavioral health service needs in local and regional jails, as well as discharge planning for inmates with behavioral health needs. If new health and behavioral health standards create a fiscal impact for communities and their jails, the state must find a way to alleviate those new costs. This could include creating a health/behavioral health add-on to state per diem payments or otherwise funding new positions and associated costs through the Compensation Board for newly required services.

Substance abuse and behavioral health needs in the justice system. VML supports the creation of state-funded programs and facilities, and funding of current programs, such as drug courts and day reporting centers, to divert individuals with mental illness from jails and juvenile detention into more appropriate community-based or in-patient treatment programs. VML opposes changes in state funding formulae to turn local and regional jails into in-patient behavioral health treatment centers.

Needs of military veterans and families. Given the number of active military members, veterans, and military families living in Virginia, it is clear that behavioral health needs of soldiers returning home with PTSD and their families must be swiftly and adequately addressed. VML urges the federal government to increase funding and access to behavioral health and addiction treatment services for active members of the military (including National Guard and Reserves), returning veterans, and their family members.

Children’s Services Act

In the last 20+ years Virginia has implemented just half of the CSA program. When the CSA was developed in the early 1990s, the plan called for comprehensive prevention programs for at risk youth and families. Unless and until the state commits to developing and funding services that address the roots of issues that bring children and families into CSA, the CSA program will continue as an expensive “catch-up” approach to addressing the complex needs of children and families.

A realistic partnership. The Commonwealth should establish a statutory provision for operation of this state-local partnership that appropriately reflects the shared responsibilities, the need for sufficient “rules and tools,” and recognizes the practical reality that correcting policy and procedural errors may take substantial time and resources.

Administrative funding. VML supports greater funding from the state to support the program’s substantial administrative requirements carried out at the local level.

Base-budget funding. The costs of CSA should be fully funded in the state’s base budget.

Expansion of the mandated population. VML opposes attempts to expand the CSA mandated population or turn CSA into the children’s mental health program. VML also opposes efforts to expand local responsibility for Medicaid match to new categories of individuals, or to require localities to pay the educational costs for children placed in residential treatment outside of the local FAPT process.

Incentive funding. The CSA funding formula should include an incentive component that rewards those local governments implementing innovative and cost-effective interventions.

State agency policy coordination. The State Executive Council must ensure that the administrative and policy requirements of the state agencies involved in the CSA are consistent with one another and consistently applied to local governments.

Service coordination. State and local governments should

work together to ensure the greatest degree of coordination between Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and CSA service plans.

Sum sufficiency. CSA serves many children who are entitled to sum sufficient services; the state must keep its commitment to fund its share of services costs for this population.

Utilization review. Local governments must maintain the flexibility to develop utilization management processes that are approved by the State Executive Council.

Facilities for Adults and Youth

Auxiliary grant program. The state should assume full responsibility for the cost of the auxiliary grant program for elderly persons and people with disabilities.

Licensure and regulation of group homes. VML urges the state to continue to work with local governments to assure adequate licensure and regulatory requirements are in place to assure community safety and well-being.

Homelessness

VML supports measures to prevent homelessness in Virginia and to assist the chronic homeless, including veterans, in obtaining appropriate rehabilitative and recovery services, job training and support, and affordable and appropriate housing. VML supports measures to remove barriers this population faces in meeting identification and residency requirements for valid state-issued identification cards. VML urges the state to create a housing trust fund and to work with communities to develop and otherwise support housing for this population.

Juvenile Justice Programs

Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA). The Virginia Municipal League urges the General Assembly to restore the 71 percent funding reduction taken in the early 2000s to the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA) program, and to support an equitable and stable funding allocation process for the program.

The VJCCCA directs localities, in cooperation with judges, court-services unit directors, and Community Policy and Management Teams under the Children’s Services Act to implement programs that divert youth from state or local confinement or help ensure the success of those re-entering the community from confinement. Every city and county participate in the program.

VJCCCA gives judges the ability to order first-time and less serious offenders to services such as electronic monitoring, intensive individual or family counseling, and group homes. Such appropriate services reduce costlier and less suitable placements in local secure detention or state correctional facilities. It also effectively serves non-mandated youth under the Children’s Services Act.

VML opposes any effort to divert existing VJCCCA funds for other purposes; any new populations proposed for services under this program must be accompanied by additional state funding.

System transformation. VML supports juvenile justice system transformation that:

- Gives juvenile detention centers flexibility, not mandates, to contract with the state to house lower-risk offenders from state facilities.
- Pays juvenile detention facilities the actual costs for housing and serving lower-risk offenders from the state.
- Allows the Department to reinvest savings or otherwise provides sufficient, stable funding to implement a treatment continuum with more service and treatment options and supports to ensure better outcomes and lower recidivism.

Social Services

Family First Prevention Services Act. Approved by Congress in 2018, the FFPS Act is the first major revision of the title IV-E foster care program since the early 1980s. Changes in the program's requirements and allowable services will require cooperation between the state, local governments, and private service providers to ensure successful implementation. VML supports this cooperative effort but opposes any proposal to impose new local match requirements to this program.

Child and family services program improvement plan. The state must fund the technology and systems to improve the quality of all casework activities related to child welfare services (prevention of child abuse/neglect; prevention foster care, foster care and adoption).

Child care. Affordable, high-quality child care is crucial to parents in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program and to low-income parents whose wages simply cannot cover child care costs. The state must help fund child care costs to help these families. The state should consider ways to ensure safe, affordable child care, such as grants for nonprofit or public organizations offering child care, and employer incentives to provide child care centers or other assistance for their employees.

Healthy families. VML supports expanded use of state general funds for the Healthy Families program, a voluntary program that offers parental education, support, and assistance to help prevent the need for costlier human services and public safety programs in the future.

Social Services Block Grant. Virginia uses Title XX-Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funding for a variety of non-cash-assistance services, including in-home services for the elderly, child and adult abuse investigators, and domestic abuse and family preservation services. Congress has consistently underfunded the SSBG at the levels authorized in the 1996 federal welfare reform law. VML urges Congress to live up to its commitment to fully fund the SSBG. Until the federal budget fully funds SSBG, VML urges the General Assembly to continue to first use any Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) balances to replace SSBG funds.

Parks & Recreation

Recreational programs. Local parks and recreation departments offer a variety of affordable activities and programs for children, teenagers, and adults. These programs abide by local health, safety, and risk-management requirements and are ultimately accountable to the local governing body of a city, town, or county. Efforts to categorize these programs as child care are inappropriate, and such recreation programs should not be subject to duplicative state agency regulation and oversight.

Health

Cooperative health budget. The General Assembly should provide sufficient funding to local health departments.

Local flexibility. District health offices should be locally controlled to the maximum extent consistent with protecting public health.

Pediatric cancer research funding. VML supports greater federal and state funding for pediatric cancer research.

Marijuana Decriminalization

VML supports a change to the Code of Virginia to eliminate any criminal or civil penalty for anyone convicted of the simple possession of no more than 0.5 oz. of marijuana for personal use. Individuals under 21 years of age found to be in possession should

still be required to undergo drug screening and participation in a treatment or education program as a condition for the suspension of a conviction if appropriate.

Health Care Reform

Expansion of state Medicaid eligibility will increase the workload and costs for local departments of social services, which perform eligibility determination and redetermination on behalf of the state. Any expansion of the caseload must be accompanied by sufficient, sustained state funding for staffing and technology to properly do the job.

Imposing work requirements on certain Medicaid recipients will also increase workload on local social services staff. The state must provide sufficient state funding and technical assistance for local social services staff who will work with this population.

Human Trafficking

VML supports the appointment of a sex trafficking response coordinator at the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the proposed development of much-needed public outreach, education, and treatment services. Outreach efforts and avenues for reporting trafficking must address language barriers for those reporting and those seeking rescue from trafficking. Since human trafficking also includes labor trafficking and affects a wide range of ages, all types of trafficking situations should ultimately be addressed in Virginia's response plan.

Driver Permits

A total of 13 states and the District of Columbia allow undocumented immigrants to obtain a driver permit as a way to encourage unlicensed drivers to pass a driver's license test and obtain car insurance, thus increasing driver safety for everyone and decreasing pressure on the uninsured drivers fund. These permits are generally limited in duration and differ in appearance from a regular state driver's license and cannot be used for federal identification purposes. Virginia should consider such permits to promote driver safety and insurance coverage and allow affected individuals to more safely transport themselves and their children within their community.

II. Education

The Virginia Municipal League supports the goal of ensuring quality, well-funded and effective teaching in every classroom in the Commonwealth. Localities have greatly exceeded their responsibilities for K-12 education funding. It is essential for the state to meet fully its responsibilities to fund education.

Vision

A strong public education system is the pillar of American society and a passport to the future. Our country cannot be strong without an excellent education system that prepares students for the future with the critical thinking skills that will enable them to be productive citizens. A solid foundation of learning is essential for our communities, state, and country. A strong public school system is essential to economic development and prosperity.

A strong educational system requires accountability; parental, community and business involvement; and the wise and efficient use of resources. Standards are an essential part of the accountability system but cannot be measured simply by standardized tests. Students need to learn not only facts and figures, but also those critical learning skills that will enable them to leave high school prepared for either the workplace or higher education.

School safety is a critical issue for every community. VML supports strong partnerships and communication between local police departments and school divisions and encourages sustained financial assistance from the state and federal governments to help school divisions with safety-related infrastructure, technology, and personnel. Additionally, VML supports the work of the special statewide committees studying student and school safety and encourages continued examination of the root causes of violence in schools and best practices to address those causes.

Students, parents, administrators and teachers all have roles in the educational system and have to be part of that accountability system. Parents should be involved with their children's education, but family support for parents is essential, particularly for those whose children have behavioral health issues, physical disabilities, substance abuse disorders or bullying problems. Not all children should or need to prepare to attend college, but students across the economic spectrum should have equitable opportunities to learn.

A sound education system puts resources where they can be most effective, includes collaboration between school boards and local governing bodies, uses technology effectively, embraces innovation and regional opportunities and focuses on early intervention to tackle problems at the earliest time possible.

Standards of Quality

The SOQ should be broad enough to include the major components of what is required for a quality educational program.

The current SOQ do not reflect the cost of a sound public education system. The SOQ are not based on prevailing practices, nor do they reflect the cost of meeting state accountability standards. Because of this disconnect between the accountability standards and the SOQ, the cost that the state recognizes in its funding formulas is too low, and too much of the burden of funding public education falls on local governments.

The state and local governments should partner to determine the minimum funding levels necessary to sustain high quality services for schools and other local government operations while also addressing capital and maintenance needs.

VML supports a JLARC or other state study that examines the ways other states fund education and whether the Commonwealth should use a funding strategy that establishes a more realistic base foundation amount per pupil – plus add-on funding to reflect higher costs for educating at-risk, disabled, ESL, and gifted students, etc., as well as funding for capital costs.

VML supports a study by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to determine how the SOQ may be revised and adequately funded to meet the requirements contained in the Standards of Learning and Standards of Accreditation. VML also supports implementation of JLARC recommendations to promote third grade reading performance.

SOQ Funding

VML supports full funding of the state's share of the actual costs of the SOQ based on prevailing practices, and full funding of the state's share of categorical educational mandates in areas such as special education, alternative education and gifted education.

The state should fully recognize and fund the costs of re-benchmarking of the various educational programs including the Standards of Quality, incentive, categorical, and school facilities programs. Changing the process of rebenchmarking to artificially lower recognized costs does not change what it actually costs to provide education. Instead, it simply transfers additional costs to local governments, and ultimately to the local real estate tax base.

The state must be a reliable funding partner in accordance

with the Virginia Constitution and state statutes. The Standards of Quality should recognize resources, including positions, required for a high-quality public education system.

Funding for the SOQ should include:

1. Establishment of a new, predictable and meaningful source of funding for construction, including funding for new construction, renovation, maintenance and land purchase. The Literary Fund and the Virginia Public School Authority are not sufficient means for the state to help localities pay for capital needs. Options could include creating a two-year pilot program of competitive grants using funds from the Virginia Public Building Authority to offset new construction or renovation costs for publicly owned and operated K-12 schools in fiscally stressed communities as defined by the Virginia Commission on Local Government.
2. A predictable and reliable source of funding for technology infrastructure and personnel costs.
3. Realistic state funding for salary increases for professional and non-professional school employees. Salary increases should be funded for a full year starting July 1, the start of the fiscal year.
4. State funding to meet the goal of the Commonwealth (VA Code §22.1-289.1) that teacher compensation be competitive; at a minimum, at or above national average teacher compensation, provided that the true costs of meeting the SOQ are funded by the state.
5. Funding to initiate and continue to enable school systems to address school safety issues.
6. Recognition of adequate support costs based on realistic measures of the importance of support positions to achievement on state accountability standards. Current state funding for support positions is not based on prevailing practices or on any scientifically-derived staffing ratios.
7. Flexibility where possible in areas such as funding of student health services.
8. Support for funding of recommendations made by JLARC to promote reading by grade level by the third grade.
9. Development of realistic cost estimates that are based on prevailing practices and not on the availability of state funding.
10. Review by JLARC in order that data and information can be provided to the State Board of Education on the cost of meeting the SOQ, SOLs and SOAs.
11. Lottery funds that are distributed to localities without a corresponding reduction in direct aid.

The state should not require any maintenance of local effort other than that associated with the SOQ. A maintenance of effort requirement that is not connected to the SOQ will punish those localities that voluntarily spent beyond the required minimum in an effort to achieve a high-quality system of education. Further, it will simply perpetuate the current mismatch in state-local funding for education.

The General Assembly should recognize that local governments traditionally have funded their share of costs of meeting the SOQ and, in fact, most have funded education beyond their required share in efforts to provide quality education. These higher funding levels have meant that localities have had to raise local taxes and fees and defer spending on other important local priorities including public safety.

The local composite index (LCI) is a crude and often inaccurate proxy for determining the ability of each locality to pay its share of K-12 expenses as defined by the SOQ. The Commonwealth's education funding formulae (SOQ and LCI) are more sensitive to the state's revenue situation than the educational needs of Virginia's students. VML supports a JLARC or other state study that examines the ways other states fund education and whether the Commonwealth should use a funding strategy that establishes a more realistic base foundation amount per pupil – plus add-on funding to reflect higher costs for educating at-risk, disabled, ESL, and gifted students, etc.

Because spending increases alone may not produce desired levels of student achievement, the State Board of Education and other responsible bodies are urged to develop measures of results to determine the actual effectiveness of expenditures on education. VML supports the use of school efficiency reviews to help determine ways to ensure that public funds are spent as effectively and efficiently as possible.

VML believes that the methodology for costing the SOQ does not consider the differences in costs in the state's various regions, nor does it adequately address unique local conditions such as small, large, declining, or diverse student populations.

First, the methodology artificially lowers the state average salary by using the "L-estimator" instead of average salary figures. Second, the L-estimator is based on dated information that does not reflect current salary levels. Third, the methodology uses an artificially low limit on the number of professionals per 1,000 pupils for which state aid is given. Fourth, the methodology does not address the differences in providing education to students with special needs or the heavy additional cost of educating English as Second Language students. The add-on funding for at-risk students is a start toward meeting unique local circumstances and should be increased.

The first priority for the use of a state surplus should be the funding of mandated educational programs.

Disparity should not be addressed by simply redistributing existing state aid among jurisdictions.

Local Autonomy

Because public education should be as close as possible to the people, local school decisions cannot and should not be made by the state. Local school boards should be responsible for the direct supervision and management of local schools.

The state should not take any actions that limit or reduce authority of local school boards and local governing bodies to finance and manage local schools. Local school boards should retain the responsibility for approving applications for charter schools. Otherwise, decisions that affect the funding of public schools potentially could be made by a statewide, appointed body that has no direct connection to the council or board of supervisors.

Alternative Education

Traditional approaches to discipline – long-term suspensions and expulsions – transfer the problems of the student from the school division to the general government. There should continue to be school alternatives to the normal school environment for students who do not behave appropriately. The state should develop and fund alternatives, including workforce development grants, for students suspended and expelled from school, such as programs designed to encourage obtainment of GEDs, career education, job skills, self-control training and drug and substance prevention. Finally, there is little effective enforcement of truancy laws for students who are over 16 years of age. Some of these students have full

time jobs and school divisions have difficulty in locating them. VML encourages the development of initiatives to better enable schools to track these older students, or otherwise determine if changes are needed to truancy laws.

Early Childhood Development & Education

Research has shown that the early childhood years (from infancy to age five) are critical years for brain development. These early years are also critical for establishing healthy lifestyles – eating nutritious foods, engaging in activities and exercise (i.e., playing), and learning basic health and safety practices.

Children who are regularly read to and gain basic language skills, who participate in healthy activities and learning experiences, and who learn basic social skills are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to learn. They are also more likely to read at grade level by the third grade. This early progress can lead to continued success in school and ultimately in the workforce.

VML supports state and local policies and initiatives that spotlight and encourage greater early learning opportunities for children, along with access to information and resources that will help parents and caregivers give young children the greatest chances to learn and grow in healthy ways. This will ensure a better economic future for families and communities.

VML supports increased state funding for pre-kindergarten students to ensure that all children entering the public system have the social and intellectual skills necessary to be successful students.

Higher Education

Virginia's colleges and universities serve as engines of economic growth, cultural enrichment, and intellectual development for communities across the Commonwealth. The decline in state support for institutions of higher education and the state's unwillingness to invest in these institutions endangers the economic health of the Commonwealth and its cities, towns, and counties.

In addition to ensuring a stronger and more diversified economic base, a healthy and vibrant higher education sector, which includes two-year as well as four-year institutions, supplies our communities with an educated and well-trained workforce that attracts new businesses and allows existing businesses to compete effectively in an increasingly competitive global economy. Further, beneficiaries of higher education tend to earn higher incomes, thus expanding the revenue stream to the state, and thereby ensuring the continued provision of quality services for its citizens. Finally, the involvement of institutions, their faculty, and their students in communities across the Commonwealth and the expanded cultural opportunities these institutions offer communities enhance the quality of life for all Virginians.

Currently, community colleges are required to offer reduced tuition for high school students. Local schools, however, are required to make up the difference in tuition. This clearly is an unfunded mandate. The state should find other resources within its higher education budget to pay for the tuition for these students.

Workforce Development

VML supports innovative approaches, including creation of satellite campuses, to ensure that training and certification programs are widely available to high school students, GED candidates, returning veterans, and other residents, particularly those representing underserved and at-risk populations. Such programs are vital to prepare Virginians for careers important to Virginia's economic prosperity.