

House Appropriations Committee

***Consolidation of the
Two Virginia Schools
for the Deaf and the Blind***

Dr. Billy K. Cannaday Jr.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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2008 General Assembly HB/SB 5001 (Bond Bill)

Board of Education to terminate all state-operated programs at the VSDBM-Hampton campus in order for construction and renovation to proceed at VSDB-Staunton

The property at the VSDBM-Hampton campus shall become surplus property as of July 1, 2009

2008 General Assembly HB/SB 5001

On May 21, 2008, the Board of Education adopted a resolution stating:

“Pursuant to House Bill/Senate Bill 5001, passed by the 2008 General Assembly, the Board of Education shall terminate all state-operated programs at the Virginia School for the Deaf, the Blind, and the Multi-Disabled in the City of Hampton, including all state-operated or state funded residential and day programs services delivered for deaf, blind, and multi-disabled students as of June 30, 2008.”

Questions

1. What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?
2. What is the status of the VSDBM-Hampton employees who are affected by the termination of services on the campus?
3. What has been done to assure the proper closing of the facility at VSDBM-Hampton?

What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?

- Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) solicited proposals over several months from entities interested in operating a regional day program on the VSDBM-Hampton campus
- No viable proposals were received

What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?

- Interviews conducted with all families of students enrolled at VSDBM-Hampton during the 2007-2008 year
- Preliminary Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings held to determine parental preferences for student placements for the 2008-2009 school year

What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?

- **18 students scheduled to transfer to VSDB-Staunton for 2008-2009**
- **13 students scheduled to be served in their local school divisions**

What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?

- Team of VSDB-Staunton staff members visited VSDBM-Hampton to observe students and talk with teachers
- Families interested in students enrolling at VSDB-Staunton visited the Staunton campus
- Team of VSDB-Staunton ‘student ambassadors’ visited VSDBM-Hampton and met with students whom they will welcome in the fall

What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?

- All new positions needed to serve the students who will transfer to VSDB-Staunton have been filled
- IEPs for the 2008-2009 school year were completed as of June 13 for student placement at VSDB-Staunton or within a school division

What has been done to ensure an effective transition for students at VSDBM-Hampton?

- Meetings held between VDOE staff and local school divisions receiving students
- Teachers/interpreters from VSDBM-Hampton have been retained to work in an outreach program to facilitate a positive transition to the Staunton campus or to a school division
- Follow-up visits planned to Staunton and local school divisions throughout the year

What is the status of VSDBM-Hampton employees affected by the termination of services on the campus?

- 89 employees have received layoff notice
- 18 anticipate retirement
- 7 have found employment
- VSDBM-Hampton and VDOE staff are administering Workforce Transition Act (WTA) benefits for laid-off employees

What has been done to assure the proper closing of the VSDBM-Hampton facility?

- Program director retained for the 2008-2009 year to oversee the outreach program and preparation of the facility for closure
- Limited staff retained for maintenance, security, and business services related to closing the facility
- VDOE staff to provide financial management and human resource support

VSDBM-Hampton Operational Budget for FY 2009

- \$3.6 million general fund appropriation in FY09 (no funds appropriated for FY10)
- Almost three-quarters of the funding to be used for WTA benefits for laid-off employees, final salary and benefit payments for 10- and 11-month employees paid on a 12-month basis, and FY09 salary and benefits for remaining staff (1 administrator, 4 outreach teachers/interpreters, 8 support staff)
- Remainder of funding to be used for maintaining the campus pending surplus, insurance coverage, utilities, VITA charges, equipment surplus/transfer to Staunton, and teacher travel to divisions