



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Executive Department

Executive Directive 14 (2017)

DIRECTING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ISSUE EMERGENCY REGULATIONS TO ADDRESS TEACHER SHORTAGE IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Importance of the Initiative

Ensuring that all students have access to a high-quality public education has been a top priority of my administration. High-quality public education provides the foundation for student success, thriving business and industry, and vibrant communities.

Teachers are the single most important factor in the quality of a child's education, and a strong education system is a prerequisite for prosperity in the New Virginia Economy. Unfortunately, Virginia is now facing a severe and growing shortage of qualified teachers, and in some high-poverty divisions the shortages are reaching crisis levels. The number of unfilled teacher positions across the state has increased by 40 percent over the past 10 years. In 2016, two months into the school year more than 1,000 fully funded positions remained vacant. This trend must be reversed in order to secure the Commonwealth's future economic growth and prosperity.

With these trends and concerns in mind, I asked the President of the State Board of Education and the Chair of the Board of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to convene an Advisory Council on Teacher Shortages ("Advisory Council") and produce policy and budget recommendations to mitigate the shortage. The report and preliminary recommendations were delivered to me in October 2017.

Among the most significant recommendations from the Advisory Council is to permit our colleges and universities to offer undergraduate majors in education that will qualify graduates to become teachers. Currently, future teachers are required to complete a five-year program. This burdens future teachers with additional debt and delays their entry into the workforce. Given the cost of higher education and the severe need for additional teachers, I believe changing this requirement will encourage more Virginians to pursue careers in education and will help supply more future teachers to meet the growing needs of our public school system.

Directive to Promulgate Emergency Regulations

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Chief Executive Officer of the

Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution and the laws of the Commonwealth, I hereby direct the Virginia Board of Education to initiate emergency regulations creating an option for Virginia's public colleges and universities to offer an undergraduate program with a major in education. The Board of Education shall promulgate these regulations no later than March 1, 2018.

Effective Date

This Executive Directive shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect unless amended or rescinded by future executive order or directive.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 11th day of December, 2017.

Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor

Attest:

Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth