

**S. JOHN DAVIS: A THEMATIC HISTORY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN
VIRGINIA AS INTERPRETED THROUGH THE PROFESSIONAL CAREER OF
THE SIXTEENTH SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

by

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(ABSTRACT)

S. John Davis served as superintendent of public instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia from 1979 to 1990. Dr. Davis worked for three governors--John N. Dalton, Charles S. Robb, and Gerald L. Baliles. His tenure in office marked an important era of innovation and change in Virginia's educational history. Davis' state superintendency is first analyzed by a description of the developmental influences which shaped his career. These influences include personal, educational, professional, and historical elements. The second factors of analysis include the institutional limits which shape the work of a state superintendent. A review of the roles of the executive branch, the legislature, the board of education, the department of education, local school divisions, education interest groups, and the Constitution and Code of Virginia make up this aspect of the study. In the third component of analysis five career themes are identified as continually

evolving elements in Davis' work. The five themes are politics, funding, educational initiatives, accountability, and management philosophy and style. These variables yield a typology for describing state superintendents of public instruction. S. John Davis' state superintendency is used to explore and test the validity of the model.

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Chapter 1

A PROFESSIONAL CAREER BEGINS

Thousands of teachers enter the field of education each year. Many remain as teachers until retirement; some become the victims of burnout or the "grass is greener" syndrome and leave the teaching profession prematurely. However, a small number of each year's class of beginning teachers eventually become administrators, entering the ranks as assistant principals before moving on to the school principalship. An even smaller number advance from school level administration to central office administration, and even fewer become division superintendents. Additionally, only a select few survive the various wars of attrition and become state superintendents of public instruction as did S. John Davis, one of the 115,000 classroom teachers who completed teacher training programs in the United States in 1950.¹

The story of how S. John Davis moved from the origins of his classroom experience and became superintendent of Virginia's largest school system (the nation's twelfth largest at that time) and then the sixteenth Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia is

¹William S. Graybeal, "Teacher Employment, Conditions of," Encyclopedia of Education 8 (1971), 6.

one which spans four decades of the last half of the twentieth century and touches most of the major trends in education during that era. It is a chronicle of the people and events that shaped public education in Virginia. It is a narrative of leadership that focuses on personality, philosophy, innate leadership qualities, political savvy, ambition, intellect, management skill and style, reaction to events, job performance, and at times an extraordinary combination of these and other qualities that are needed for one to obtain and hold a position of influence.

S. John Davis was born October 9, 1928, in Blacklick, Pennsylvania, only a year before the stock market crash of October 1929. His father was Spear J. Davis, who worked as superintendent of mines for the Clearfield Bituminous Coal Company, a subsidiary of the Central Coal Company of New York. Spear Davis' parents had migrated to Pennsylvania from Wales. S. John's mother was Elizabeth Collins, a housewife whose family came to Pennsylvania from Scotland. Like his father, she too was a second generation American, making S. John a third generation American.

S. John soon became known as Jack to differentiate him from the other John Davises in his family. Jack was the youngest of three children. His brother Norman E. became an art teacher and head football coach at the Elizabeth, Pennsylvania, high school. Norman enlisted in the Army Air

Corps in May of 1941 and was taken prisoner by the Japanese army. After surviving a "Death March" across the Philippines, Norman died in a prisoner of war camp before the end of the war. Jack's sister Margaret Davis Everett became a registered nurse, married a doctor, and settled in the Washington, DC, area.

Jack Davis attended elementary school in Dixonville, Pennsylvania, and started high school in Commodore, Pennsylvania. When his father's health deteriorated so that he had to leave the mining industry to become superintendent of buildings and grounds at Indiana State Teachers College in Indiana, Pennsylvania, Jack transferred to the Keith School, which was the laboratory school for teacher training at Indiana State. After one year at the Keith School, Jack finished school at Indiana High School, a consolidated township school.

Following high school graduation, young Davis spent one year as a pre-med student at George Washington University in Washington, DC, and then returned home and entered Indiana State Teachers College with the idea of becoming either a chemist or a teacher. Upon graduation from Indiana State in May of 1950, he applied for a job with the Bureau of Standards in the nation's capital and for teaching positions in Arlington County, Virginia, and Baltimore County, Maryland. He received offers from both school systems while

he was student teaching and promptly withdrew his application for a federal government position. He then accepted the first offer he had received and was assigned to teach science at Stratford Junior High School in Arlington County, Virginia, in the fall of 1950 for a salary of \$2,400 a year.² His career as a professional educator had begun.

Twenty-nine years later Governor John N. Dalton would appoint S. John Davis to be Virginia's sixteenth Superintendent of Public Instruction. From the junior high school classroom to the headmastership of a K-12 private preparatory school, from a high school principalship to an area superintendency, from the superintendency of the nation's twelfth largest school system to the head of K-12 public education for the Commonwealth of Virginia--S. John Davis rose through the ranks. For almost eleven years Dr. Davis was the state's chief school officer, serving under the Republican governor who appointed him originally and under the two subsequent Democratic governors who reappointed him before he retired in the first months of the term of yet another Democratic governor.

This study will present a thematic history of public education in Virginia, and it will proffer a look at the

²S. John Davis, interview by author, Midlothian, Virginia, 3 June 1992 and S. John Davis, "Vita," in Davis' personal papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

personalities, issues, and events that made up the narrative of Dr. Davis' periods of leadership. It will peer into the underlying structures that shaped Davis' actions and created the conditions from which his organizational behavior developed. It will strive to help educators learn from history and build upon the past, and it will depict Dr. Davis' characteristics and provide a model by which the work of a superintendent of public instruction can be described.

Periods of Leadership

During his career in education S. John Davis held several important leadership positions. There were four distinct periods of such leadership service characterized by his duties as the chief school officer at the local and state levels. Each one of these eras was distinguished by the educational programs developed through Dr. Davis' leadership and delimited by the people, events, and trends that touched his life and work at each level of his personal and professional evolution. This study will describe each one of these periods of leadership and discuss the factors that were highly visible and symbolically important to Davis' career as an educator.

The first epoch of Dr. Davis' career that will be depicted in detail covered his nine-year tenure as Fairfax

County's top administrator. These Fairfax years saw Jack Davis develop into a successful division superintendent who eventually was considered for the appointment as Virginia's Superintendent of Public Instruction by one governor before Governor John N. Dalton of Radford named him state superintendent to succeed W. Eugene Campbell in 1979.

The second period covered the final two and one-half years of Governor Dalton's administration and saw Dr. Davis become entrenched in the state capital. The initiatives that were to become the benchmarks of his leadership at the state level were begun during this period.

The third era was in a sense the "glory years" of Dr. Davis' state superintendency and covered the gubernatorial administration of Charles S. Robb. With strong support from the governor and an influx of new money from an expanding economy during Governor Robb's term in office, Dr. Davis' state superintendency was marked by a host of programs designed to advance education, answer the critics, and meet the challenge of the technological era.

The fourth stage covered the four-year span of the governorship of Robb's successor Gerald L. Baliles. This period was marked by educational reform and by major directional changes in the role of the state superintendent, the secretary of education, and the state board.

In a final period, the advent of the administration of

Governor L. Douglas Wilder saw Jack Davis' state leadership role come to a close and saw him move to a new career as an educational consultant. An epilog to this stage also saw the reemergence of S. John Davis as the chief educational advisor to the Democratic gubernatorial nominee, two-term Attorney General Mary Sue Terry. With Ms. Terry's defeat in the 1993 gubernatorial race, Dr. Davis remained a figure of influence, however, because Governor George F. Allen appointed a Davis protege superintendent of public instruction. William C. Bosher, Jr., superintendent of Henrico County and a high-level department of education staff member under Davis before going to Henrico County, has considered Davis his mentor, and the two have conferred frequently. The career of S. John Davis in public life might have another chapter yet to be written as the extent of Davis' influence in the state capitol is played out in the 1990s.

Thematic Analysis

As S. John Davis' career moved through each of the four distinct periods of leadership that have been pinpointed, several themes emerged that were an integral part of his educational career in each era. A preliminary analysis of his professional work using information discerned in initial interviews and readings and gleaned from this author's own

knowledge of Dr. Davis' work as state superintendent led to the identification of five important, continuously evolving themes in his professional pursuits. Each of the four periods of leadership will be analyzed under the following reoccurring thematic headings: politics, funding, educational initiatives, accountability, and management philosophy and style.

Politics represents an integral element influencing educational leadership. This theme is used to include everything related to the political workings of an educational leader. Dr. Davis will be examined as a political practitioner in terms of his work with local and state boards of education, local and state governing bodies, county administrators and governors, secretaries of education, and all of the other political constituencies an educational leader has to engage in daily combat to establish his programs and to gain reappointment.

Funding is obviously a critical factor in educational program leadership, development, and implementation. Educational finances under Dr. Davis' leadership warrant a separate thematic category both for data collection and analysis of impact.

Educational initiative was chosen to represent the educational goals, objectives, and programs that resulted from Jack Davis' leadership. The chief indicators for an

evaluation of his work as a division superintendent are found in the instructional programs that actually impacted the education of students in Fairfax County and across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Accountability was also a major focus of and influence on Dr. Davis' career. In each period of his administrative leadership the importance of accountability, in terms of the results of the programmatic initiatives Dr. Davis had promulgated, will be assessed.

Management philosophy and style influence an educational leader's works, relationships, and ultimate accomplishments. Dr. Davis' management philosophy and style will be examined closely in each period, and effects will be analyzed carefully in terms of impact on leadership effectiveness and instructional program results.

These five major thematic headings will be identical in Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 to facilitate the comparison of one period to another and to show the effect and the evolving impact of like factors from one year to the next. Chapter titles will reflect the chronological sequence of Dr. Davis' career and depict a dominant influence of the time described. Chapter 1 is titled "A Professional Career Begins." Chapter 2 is titled "The Fairfax Years." Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are titled "The Dalton Years," "The Robb Years," and "The Baliles Years" respectively. Chapter 6 is titled

"The Retirement Years" and describes the years after the state superintendency. Chapter 7 is titled "Describing a State Superintendent" and contains the conclusions to the study.

Influences

To understand S. John Davis and his work is to understand the principal influences that impacted his life and thinking. These influences encompassed four primary background categories: personal, educational, professional, and historical. The personal influences included the affect members of his family had on him, his work experience outside education, life in a small town in rural Pennsylvania, and his own unique personality. Educational impressions came from his elementary and secondary school experience, his undergraduate and teacher training programs, his graduate work, and his doctoral dissertation. Davis' professional life and associates also provided him with lasting imprints. Several colleagues, events, and readings helped develop and mature his fundamental philosophy of education and management. The fourth area of influence on Davis originated from the historical context of the significant trends and movements in public education during his life and career. Events outside Dr. Davis' own domain had considerable weight on the course of his professional

career and his ultimate legacy to education.

Personal

All men are products of the environmental and hereditary factors that shape them as human beings. Jack Davis' career as an educational leader was affected by both his home surroundings and his ancestry.

The most obvious characteristic about Davis that one can observe personally or learn from interviewing people who worked with him is his personality. Jack Davis was, and is, an affable person. He was generally well-liked and had the ability to make people feel good. His gregarious personality was a family trait with his father and his uncle John, two major family influences, both possessing the same outgoing personalities.

Spear J. Davis was a strong father figure for young Jack. Jack observed his father relating personally to the miners he supervised in the small coal mining town in western Pennsylvania where he grew up. He observed the way his father spoke to the men he supervised when he met them on the street in town. He saw his father's interest in the workers' families and their lives. He was impressed with the fact that his father, limited in formal schooling, learned to speak Polish so that he could talk to the newly immigrated miners in their native language.

Davis also learned about tolerance from his father. He witnessed an episode which made a lasting impression on him in his early teens. His father was serving on the Greene Township School Board. One night Jack had gone to bed, but he overheard his father talking to a visitor. A young man had come to see Mr. Davis about a teaching job. He told Mr. Davis that he was a Roman Catholic and that he was not being hired in Greene Township because of his religion. Jack's father in return indicated that he would not support such religious discrimination.

Young Jack Davis also learned about working with organized labor from his father. Mr. Davis, as a mine supervisor, was part of company management, but he felt comfortable working with union members and officials. Jack Davis felt at ease working with union personnel, and his management reflected that comfort level.

Jack Davis was taught strong moral values by his parents, and both his father and mother valued education for their children. However, Jack's uncle John E. Davis, a college educator who became head of teacher training at Indiana (PA) State Teachers College, was an even greater influence educationally on young Jack. Jack observed first hand this well-known Pennsylvania educator and sought diligently to please his uncle. When Jack realized that a career in medicine was not for him, Uncle John encouraged

and supported him in his decision to consider teaching as an alternative. Enrolling at Indiana State and matriculating in the teacher training program designed and administered by his uncle added the imprint of Uncle John's pedagogy on young Jack. When Jack received his first teaching offer from Arlington County, he accepted immediately. Then, when the second offer came from Baltimore County with a higher salary, Jack went to Uncle John and asked what he should do. Uncle John told his nephew that since he had signed a contract with Arlington County, the only honorable thing to do was to fulfill that contract. Uncle John expected Jack to do well in and out of school. Jack was cognizant of conducting himself in such a way that would please Uncle John.³

Jack Davis' wife Jan also became a major influence in his life and on his career. From her initial encouragement and support for Jack to enter graduate school, Janet Colson Davis was a staunch supporter who made a good home for Jack and their four children. As he advanced in his profession with long hours of work and many nights away from home, it was Jan who constantly encouraged and advised her husband. Often when Jack returned home late from another meeting, Jan met him with a cup of coffee and a willing ear to listen to

³S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

him as he unwound from a difficult day. When Jack was state superintendent, Jan often traveled with him, sat in on meetings with him, and offered encouragement and sometimes advice.⁴

The experience of growing up in a small town where one knew virtually everyone else remained with Jack Davis all of his life. Even in the midst of the vastness of the Fairfax County School System and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Jack Davis tended to break things down into smaller parts. Jack Herrity, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, spoke of this trait at a "send-off to Richmond" reception when Jack Davis was leaving Fairfax County to take up his new post. Herrity, in his tribute to Superintendent Davis, described him as "an administrator with that extra something to run a school system of 130,000 students as if it were a little red school house."⁵ In Richmond Davis continued this preference--working one on one with key legislators or visiting schools more often than his predecessor or successor in the state superintendency.⁶

Jack Davis' summer work experience, which began during

⁴Janet C. Davis, interview by author, Midlothian, Virginia, 3 June 1992.

⁵Ina Lee Selden, "Fairfax Bids a Fond Goodbye To Superintendent," The Washington Post, 28 June 1979, VA 3.

⁶William H. Cochran, interview by author, Richmond, Virginia, 7 January 1994.

his high school years, also had repercussions on his future educational priorities. During the summers after his junior and senior years in college, he worked at the Easter Seal Society's Camp for Crippled Children in Somerset, Pennsylvania. Jack was impressed with the courage and persistence the youngsters at camp showed. After he began teaching at Stratford Junior High School in Arlington, he worked several summers at Bald Eagle Day Camp for handicapped children.⁷

A more personal event also helped Jack Davis develop an empathy for impaired youngsters. His sister gave birth to a daughter who was afflicted with cerebral palsy and lived only a few years.⁸ Having a niece so handicapped added to Jack's awareness of the need for special education programs in public schools.

As will be described in the following chapters that give the details of S. John Davis' career in public education, these influences from his personal life contributed to the Davis approach.

⁷S. John Davis, interview by author, Roanoke, Virginia, 26 April 1993.

⁸Janet C. Davis, interview by author, Midlothian, Virginia, 4 February 1994.

Educational

In 1934 when Jack Davis entered elementary school in Dixonville, Pennsylvania, during the "Great Depression," the educational system he encountered was typical of rural Pennsylvania and rural America at that time. Dixonville was a small coal-mining town, and the elementary school contained grades one through eight with one section per grade and twenty-five to thirty-five students per class. Each room featured a coal-fired, pot-bellied stove and oiled wooden floors. There was no cafeteria, and no buses served the town. Jack and his fellow students walked to and from school and home for lunch on the main highway that bisected Dixonville.

Influential in Jack's elementary education was third grade teacher Mary Christman, who though a stern disciplinarian was also caring and understanding. His fifth grade teacher Olive Siverd influenced Jack to go beyond academics and stimulated his interest in art and music. Science was his favorite subject, and his basic orientation was to take things apart to see how they worked.

When Jack left the eighth grade and entered high school, he began his studies at the township's consolidated high school, twenty-five miles from home. However, before Jack finished the ninth grade, he transferred to Keith School, the laboratory school for the education department

at Indiana State. The lab school featured very small classes and student teachers. John E. Davis, Jack's uncle, was head of the school.

After the tenth grade, Jack went to Indiana High School, a comprehensive high school which was traditional in its program offerings. He took Latin, Spanish, and all the sciences the school offered, i.e., biology, chemistry, and physics. He also was active in dramatics and had a lead role in both the junior and senior class plays. When he graduated from high school in 1946, the war had just ended. With his interest in science and a brother-in-law who was a medical doctor, Jack entered George Washington University to study pre-medicine.'

The pre-medicine phase of his education lasted one year. As a Fairfax reporter later described it, "Picture a college freshman, a spotlighted operating table, an appendectomy in progress--the trembling figure of Jack Davis blacking out and being helped from the operating room."¹⁰ Not being able to stand the sight of an operation in progress ended dreams of medicine but gave birth to an educator.

Jack Davis was the only one of the students in his

⁹S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

¹⁰Jane Sims, "Davis: Low-Key Schools Chief," Fairfax Journal, 2 August 1973, B-1.

Dixonville Elementary School class who went on to college. Although his father had only a second grade education and his mother finished her schooling with the eighth grade, education was emphasized in his home. His parents expected college attendance, and Uncle John Davis, the only one of the six Davis boys to attend college, influenced Jack's decision to become a teacher and his later work in education.¹¹

Jack Davis' undergraduate program at Indiana State Teachers College (later Indiana University of Pennsylvania) featured preparation for two possible careers: chemist or teacher. His course work was predominately scientific as he took sufficient chemistry, biology, and physics to become certified to teach all three. He also took the required education courses and did his student teaching at Indiana State's lab school.¹²

Davis' scientific orientation had an influence on his approach to education and carried over into his administrative work. The definition of science that refers to "accumulated knowledge systematized and formulated with

¹¹g. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

¹²g. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

reference to the discovery of general truths"¹³ defined a key aspect of S. John Davis' orientation. The notion of systems had a great deal of appeal to Davis as both a scientist and an educational manager.

An overview of the primary influences of Jack Davis' graduate school program reveals his proclivity for systematized approaches. Davis' dissertation to fulfill requirements for a Doctor of Education Degree in school administration at American University was entitled Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems: A New Horizon in Public School Financial Management. The key bibliographical entries in his dissertation also were important works in his graduate studies on administration and instruction. Works studied included Robert F. Mager's Preparing Instructional Objectives, Benjamin S. Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Jerome S. Bruner's The Process of Education, and Harry J. Hartley's Educational Planning-Programming-Budgeting: A Systems Approach. Influential professors were Dr. Chalmer A. Gross and Dr. Ralph Whitfield of the American University faculty, whose interest and expertise in management by objectives, programmed budgeting, and systems

¹³Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (2nd ed.) (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1959), 757.

analysis solidified Davis' thought and philosophy.¹⁴

Davis' career as an educator was also influenced by three texts that he encountered in his graduate work. The three books were Warren C. Bennis' Changing Organizations (1966), Chester I. Barnard's The Functions of the Executive (1964), and Douglas M. McGregor's The Human Side of Enterprise (1960).¹⁵ The adherence by Davis to the thinking of these theorists placed him under the influence of the revisionists, who since 1950 have attempted to reconcile and integrate classical and modern organizational theory. Many of the concepts expressed in the management theory of the revisionists will be seen in Dr. Davis' management philosophy during his professional career.

Professional

S. John Davis became a professional educator in the

¹⁴S. John Davis, Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems: A New Horizon in Public School Financial Management (Ed. D. diss., American University, 1971), ii, 116.

¹⁵Peter P. Kinnahan, "Ideas into Action: A Comparative Study of the Philosophy and Performance of Ms. Barbara A. Sizemore, Superintendent, District of Columbia Public Schools, and Dr. S. John Davis, Division Superintendent, Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools" (Public Administration Department, George Washington University, 1975), 3. (An unpublished paper prepared for a graduate course entitled Behavior Factors in Large Organizations, PAD 223; in the files of the public relations office, Fairfax County School Board.)

fall of 1950 when he reported for work as a junior high school teacher in Arlington County, Virginia. The first professionals to make an impression on the young science teacher were his first principal Claude Richmond and his first assistant principal Doris Mortimer (later Matthews). Richmond and Mortimer were strong administrators and positive role models for a neophyte teacher. Stratford Junior High School was a well-run school. Principal Richmond was a good organizer, a stern disciplinarian, and yet a compassionate man. Mrs. Mortimer complemented him well. She was especially effective in instruction; yet she had a firm manner with students. Both administrators worked at building staff morale, and their school was a pleasant place for adults and children alike. The school was also open to parents and the community, and good communication lines were established with the public.

Mr. Richmond and Mrs. Mortimer were willing to delegate authority, and the two allowed Jack Davis to take on extra responsibilities to give him experience in the total school program. Mrs. Mortimer, in particular, took Mr. Davis under her tutelage, allowed him to help her in some of her administrative duties, and encouraged him to complete his master's degree and become certified in administration.¹⁶

¹⁶G. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

When Jack Davis became an assistant principal in 1955, he was hired by Principal James W. Tyler of Kenmore Junior High School in Arlington County. Tyler was an experienced elementary school principal who eventually became superintendent of a large city school system. Tyler was particularly influential in Jack Davis' career because he gave him responsibility for certain aspects of the school program. Davis learned that he could handle the discipline system that Tyler had instituted, and with Tyler's guidance the young assistant principal set up the new junior high school's grading system and coordinated the teachers' orientation to the system.¹⁷ The fledgling administrator was fortunate to have professional administrators like Richmond, Mortimer, and Tyler to advise him in his first practical school management situations.

Two superintendents influenced S. John Davis in his professional practices. The first was Dr. Earl C. Funderburke, who brought Jack Davis to Fairfax County as an assistant principal, promoted him to a principalship, and then made him an area superintendent. From Funderburke's words and actions, Jack Davis added to his knowledge base of politics in Fairfax County and increased his political awareness. He also was influenced by Funderburke's

¹⁷James W. Tyler, telephone conversation with author, 29 September 1993.

enthrallment with the building program in rapidly growing Fairfax County. When he became superintendent, he made a conscious effort to place educational programs first.

The second superintendent S. John Davis learned from was his immediate predecessor in Fairfax County, Dr. Lawrence M. Watts. Davis admired Watts' instructional innovation and curriculum design expertise, but he learned quickly that Watts' ineffective communication and seeming lack of concern about the human factor when personnel moves were made was not the best management practice. Davis was later able to reorganize his staff in Fairfax County without creating the turmoil that Watts had wrought.¹⁸

Dr. Davis was also affected by several prominent Fairfax County citizens who were lay leaders in educational circles. John Goldsmith and William Perlik, Davis' first two school board chairmen after he became division superintendent, encouraged and supported him in the early years. Their confidence in his ability to lead added to Davis' self-confidence in his first years as superintendent of Fairfax County.¹⁹

Two other major sources of inspiration in Davis' life and career were Anne Kahn of Fairfax and Senator Edward E.

¹⁸S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

¹⁹S. John Davis, telephone conversation with author, 25 January 1994.

Willey of Richmond. Mrs. Kahn, a Fairfax County School Board member and a one-time president of the National Parent-Teacher Association, helped Jack Davis develop a better understanding of cultural, religious, racial, and gender inequalities in society. Senator Willey, who attended the same church in Richmond as did the Davises, became a political mentor and a quasi-father figure to Superintendent Davis. After Jack's father's death, Uncle John E. Davis had become the dominant family influence for Jack. Uncle John died about the time that Dr. Davis moved to Richmond, and after a while Ed Willey began to fill the role of an older, experienced advisor that his father and then his uncle had previously filled in Jack's life.²⁰

A final area of influence on Dr. Davis from a professional mode was the reading that he did to keep himself abreast of educational trends. Many of the journals and professional magazines focused on the accountability and reform issues previously discussed. He regularly read the Education Digest and publications of Phi Delta Kappa, the National Education Association, the Virginia Education Association, the American Association of School Administrators, and the American School Board Association.²¹

²⁰S. John Davis, interview by author, Richmond, Virginia, 4 February 1994.

²¹S. John Davis, "Vita."

He was also influenced by several books that he had studied in his graduate school courses. In particular, the forementioned works of Warren Bennis, Chester Barnard, and Douglas McGregor remained in his professional library, and he referred to them on occasion. He also continued his interest in programmed budgeting and management by objectives and often updated his knowledge in these areas. For a while in the 1980s he became interested in the "effective schools" research and added that literature to his professional library. He also read extensively in the literature dealing with the preparation of teachers and administrators.

Obviously, there were many other professional influences on a state superintendent. Department of education staff, state board members, governors, secretaries of education, General Assembly leaders, local school boards and superintendents, and the Virginia Education Association --to name just a few--all brought their agendas and their pressures to Dr. Davis' table.

Historical

S. John Davis was born in the "Roaring Twenties," attended elementary school during the Great Depression, went to high school with World War II raging in Europe and the Orient, and then attended college during the five years immediately following the war. He began his teaching career

in 1950 as the second half of the nineteenth century began. Education was deeply affected by the new forces in American life that had been released in the post-war era. As one studies Dr. Davis' professional work and analyzes the converging factors that shaped him as an educator and a leader, it is valuable to identify and evaluate the historical trends that impacted education and Jack Davis' career from 1950 until his retirement in 1990.

R. Freeman Butts saw education in the years after World War II as having four major purposes and traced the history of education in this period in these four areas. The first was the call for greater emphasis upon academic studies and intellectual discipline. The growth of intellectualism in the 1930s and 1940s led to the new math, the new science, and the new social studies of the 1950s and 1960s, and to a national assessment of school achievement. The perceived decline of test scores led to the "back to the basics" movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

The second was the call for greater attention to the development of the individual talents that went from the project method and intelligence testing of the 1920s to the child-centered emphasis of the 1930s and 1940s, to the "romantic reformers" of the 1960s to the national commissions on youth and secondary education of the 1970s.

The third was the call for vocational competence that

was heard in demands for training in the technological skills needed in both world wars and in jobs for unemployed youth in the New Deal's programs to meet the demands of the depression. Alarms triggered by Sputnik in 1957 emphasized the need for scientific and technical studies, and vocational training was reemphasized by the influx of rural youth to the cities in the 1950s, by the war on poverty of the 1960s, and by stress on career education in the 1970s.

The fourth was the call for social efficiency which was expanded to include students in programs of "common learning" and "life adjustment" of the 1940s and "behavior modification" and "psychological intervention" in the 1950s and 1960s. It also included teachers and administrators in the demand for accountability, management by objectives, and competency-based teacher education in the 1960s and 1970s.²²

Jack Davis' experience as a teacher and an administrator in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s reflected these four major themes of American education, and all of them coalesced in the 1980s when he served as state superintendent. Greater emphasis upon academic studies and intellectual discipline were reflected in Dr. Davis' leader-

²²R. Freeman Butts, Public Education in the United States: From Revolution to Reform (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), 263.

ship in response to the criticism of the reform reports of the 1980s. Greater attention to the development of individual talents was seen in his attention to the two extremes of student ability--the gifted and the handicapped learner. The call for vocational competence heard in demands for training in the technological skills was seen in his emphasis on all forms of technology ranging from computers to the electronic classroom to competency-based vocational education. The call for social efficiency was especially reflected in Dr. Davis' response to accountability in both Fairfax and Richmond as he promoted management by objectives and other competency-based management approaches.

In a sense as the nation emerged from the Second World War with idealism and aspirations raised high, the inequitable features of American education seemed more unacceptable than before. The shortage of teachers was a national problem; low salaries were commonplace. There was a critical need for new classrooms, for replacement and repair deferred by depression and to have room for the "baby boom" after World War II. Also, there was a growing awareness that the nation was entering an age of technological and scientific advancements that made necessary the raising of educational levels. Questions such as who should be educated, who would pay for education, and how many years of

schooling were needed were being discussed.²³

The second half of the nineteenth century also saw a number of experiments in education that appeared to contradict earlier commitment to commonality. Special tracks in education were designed for special elements in the population: industrial and vocational education for blacks, immigrants, and other poor people as well as a university experience for the elite. Educators like Dr. Davis, who were seeking to provide appropriate educational experiences for children from widely varying backgrounds and children who seemed to share few aspirations or ability, redefined both equality and democracy. Control over education was increasingly vested in professionally trained experts. Such educational professionalism tended to spawn administrative bureaucracies and greatly influenced the ways that educational services were distributed among individuals and groups in American society.²⁴

In the 1950s, when Jack Davis became a junior high school teacher, there was a volley of criticism aimed at public schools. Books by Mortimer Smith, Albert Lynd, Arthur Bestor, Robert Hutchins, and Hyman Rickover high-

²³Diane Ravitch, The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980 (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 6, 7.

²⁴Robert L. Church and Michael W. Sedlak, Education in the United States: An Interpretive History (New York: The Free Press, 1976), 370, 371.

lighted the so-called aimlessness of public education. Schools were not exacting enough; there was too much emphasis on social activities, personality development, and the project method which watered down academic skills. The demand was for a return to the basics--more grammar, more math, required work in algebra and trigonometry, and more reading in classic literature.²⁵

The fifties and sixties, the two decades that saw Jack Davis move from the classroom to administration and from the public schools to the private academy and then back to the public schools, also saw several major trends develop from the attacks of the critics and the events of the times. First, was a major effort to revamp school curricula to stress academic disciplines and redefine these disciplines as methods of thinking rather than as merely bodies of fact. Curriculum revision began in physics (1956), mathematics (1958), and also in biology, chemistry, and social studies in the 1960s. A second major influence of educational critics was their impact on the pattern of financing public education. By stressing both the national purpose of schooling above local purposes and the relationship of schools to national defense, the federal government became a more natural source of financial support. Third, critics

²⁵Ibid., 405.

influenced the growth of cognitive psychology which argued that children could learn complex intellectual skills at an early age.²⁶ Jerome Bruner's belief that any subject can be taught efficiently in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development²⁷ caused educators to reevaluate their pedagogy.

Other effects of the 1950s and 1960s included the fears and propaganda of the Cold War which emphasized the need for more efficient and intellectually stimulating schools and the concept of preparedness for war which meant highly trained personnel to operate complicated and expensive machinery were needed.

On another level suburbanites of the upper and middle classes sought schools that would push youngsters to their potential, prepare them for demanding colleges, and protect them from much of the economic and social insecurity of the 1950s and 1960s. The upper middle class found the advice to return to the subject-matter disciplines to the traditional intellectual values of schooling congenial. Public schools continuing the stress on education for community and for adjusting kids to local life made little sense to the more transient population in the new suburbs like those in

²⁶Ibid., 414, 415.

²⁷Jerome Bruner, The Process of Education (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960), iv.

Fairfax County. Therefore, the focus on education needed to be more national and focus on national manpower needs, on the products of national curriculum revision projects, and on the entrance requirements of the better colleges. Changes pointed toward establishing intellectual merit as the central criterion of success in the United States. Advanced education was essential to career paths that led to positions of leadership, power, and high or even upper middle class social status. The middle class recognized this.

Consequently, school boards in upper and middle class suburbs moved more quickly to adopt the new education than did rural or urban systems. Suburban middle-class parents understood the important relation of precollege education to later success. Suburbs were more conducive to change; and the pattern of financing public schools through local property taxes made the well-to-do suburbs more able to adopt new and expensive curricula, pay higher salaries and attract the best teachers, and build facilities and enlarge staffs to cope with the migration to suburbs.²⁸ Jack Davis' administrative experience in Fairfax County reflected this suburban embrace of changing educational values.

²⁸Church and Sedlak, 417-427.

Accountability

One of the major trends that impacted public education in the second half of the twentieth century was the influence that business and industry had on America's schools. The quality of instructional programs and teaching and how much students achieved before leaving school were of major concern to employers and to school leaders like S. John Davis.

Directly related to the emerging importance of business and industry in the 1960s and 1970s was the accountability movement which soon played a major role in Jack Davis' educational leadership approach. Roots of the emerging patterns of accountability in education can be traced to Washington, DC, as spillover and fallout from President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration's launching of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Accountability was important in compensatory education, and the Title I program that emerged emphasized accountability principles.²⁹

More visibility was given to educational accountability in the late 1960s when Leon Lessinger served as associate commissioner of the United States Office of Education.

²⁹Leslie H. Browder, Jr., An Administrator's Handbook on Educational Accountability (Arlington, Virginia: American Association of School Administrators, 1973), 10.

Lessinger saw accountability in terms of the right of students to learn and the right of taxpayers to know what results education produced for the dollars spent.³⁰

Lessinger believed that educators should be required to describe and measure the behavior expected of each student upon completion of the programs they proposed for funding.³¹

Lessinger's refrain was emphasized when in his 1969 "State of Education" address President Richard M. Nixon stated the following:

a corresponding need in the school systems of the nation...to begin responsible open measurement of how well the educational process is working. It matters very little how much a school building costs; it matters a great deal how much a child in that building learns.... We have, as a nation, too long avoided thinking of the productivity of schools.³²

Again on March 3, 1970, President Nixon's "Message on Education Reform," which opened with the words "American

³⁰Don T. Martin and others, Accountability in American Education: A Critique (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Book Company, 1976), 32.

³¹Leon M. Lessinger and D. M. Allen, "Performance Proposals for Educational Funding," Phi Delta Kappan 51 (November 1967), 136.

³²Richard M. Nixon, "State of Education Address," Washington, DC, 1969, as quoted in James L. Laffey, "Accountability: A Brief History and Analysis," Robert B. Ruddell, Ed., Accountability and Reading Instruction: Critical Issues (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1973), 4.

education is in urgent need of reform," used the same line of reasoning. The President told the nation:

We derive another concept: accountability. School administrators and teachers alike are responsible for their performances.... Success should be measured not by some fixed national norm, but rather by the results achieved in relation to the actual situation of the particular school and the particular set of students.³³

Political and educational leaders like Nixon and Lessinger were primarily responsible for the renewed interest in accountability. Some government officials believed that educators should be required to describe and measure the behavior expected of each student upon completion of the program they proposed for funding. Other politicians viewed accountability as a way to solve severe budget problems and cut burgeoning costs of education. Educators like Jack Davis saw the use of accountability as a way to answer critics of education and to eliminate waste and improve efficiency.³⁴ Accountability in the 1960s and 1970s stood for both a movement and a cluster of associated ideas recommended for use in schools. Among these ideas were the notion that educational objectives should be couched in behavioral terms, the requirement that pedagogy

³³Richard M. Nixon, "Message on Education Reform," Washington, DC, 3 March 1970, as quoted in Browder, 10.

³⁴Laffey, "Accountability: A Brief History and Analysis," 4.

be competence- or performance-based, the insistence on a strategy of educational evaluation which limited itself to that which could be observed and measured, and a call for the use of techniques of behavioral control which depended on an assumed instrumental relationship between means and ends.³⁵

There were four general models of accountability: (1) the investment model, in which educational expenditures were analyzed as investments that resulted in predictable returns to the economy; (2) the production model, in which the school was the machine, educational expenditure was an input, and the output was a valuable consumer good; (3) the motivation research model, which led to the search for unexpressed needs in a clientele, the development of a product to satisfy the latent need, and a program to arouse popular demand for the project; and (4) the systems model, in which the management of schools was analyzed in terms of efficiency through cost-benefit studies, system analysis, and program planning and budgeting systems.³⁶

The accountability movement that influenced S. John Davis combined the work of systems technologists and

³⁵Dan T. Martin and others, 3.

³⁶H. Thomas James, "The New Cult of Efficiency and Education," in Lesley H. Browden, Jr., Emerging Patterns of Administrative Accountability, Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1971, 41.

behavioral objectivists. The systems concept performed an integrative function in its application and was able to fuse together the contributions of several disciplines that would otherwise have had little in common. Behavioral objectivists studied educational measurement and believed that, if a child learned, his behavior would change. This changed behavior was possible to measure or observe. Therefore, it made sense to develop educational goals and objectives in forms of learner behaviors desired, and then the instructional program could be geared to develop the desired behavior changes.

Educators like Jack Davis subscribed to a variety of approaches to make schools more accountable. Four such approaches can be seen in Davis' educational leadership: (1) management strategies that featured systems-based technologies like programmed budgeting, (2) educational program auditing which stressed critical evaluations of specified portions of school programs, (3) defined levels of performance expectations as in management by objectives, and (4) institutional responsiveness through increased local participation and semi-autonomy which moved the major locus of power from the more centralized but more distant source

to participants on the scene.³⁷

In retrospect it is not surprising that S. John Davis would add the tools of the accountability movement to his repository of leadership skills and make it an integral part of his educational philosophy. His appointment as division superintendent in Fairfax County in 1970 coincided with the apogee of the accountability movement. His proximity to the nation's capitol also increased his awareness of accountability. School boards, school advisory committees, and local governing bodies in Fairfax County all had members who worked for the federal government and were knowledgeable of and advocates for systems analysis, programmed budgeting, management by objectives, school audits, and the other attributes of the accountability movement. A discerning superintendent could not ignore the accountability movement, and Jack Davis understood the importance of being accountable to the public that paid the educational bill.

School Reform

Another historical trend impacting S. John Davis' professional career and the schools he led stemmed from the reform proposals that swept the nation in the 1970s and

³⁷Laffey, "Accountability: A Brief History and Analysis," 14.

1980s. The reports of the 1970s like those of the 1980s focused on crisis in the nation's schools. However, the concerns of the reforms took different approaches in each of the decades.

The reform reports of the seventies recognized that both society and schooling had changed and were continuing to change. The various commissions were concerned with the broader context of schooling and school climate as these affected the quality of life and education in schools. Many of the reports concentrated on two perceived troublesome weaknesses of American high schools: (1) the lack of relevance in curriculum and instruction because of curricula did not evolve from students' needs, interests, and concerns and (2) the lack of humaneness in schools because of failure to handle successfully issues such as racism, authoritarianism, student disruption, gender equity, and the mix of young people from different social backgrounds. These reports viewed the nation as threatened by what was happening to the personal development of students and to society in general.

The Kettering Commission, for instance, concentrated on sudden and traumatic changes in the missions of the schools:

The American comprehensive high school today must be viewed as an establishment striving to meet the complex demands of society in the throes of social change at a time when the school system has become too large an institution and is literally overrun

with a mix of young people from inconsistent social backgrounds.³⁸

Similarly, the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education concluded that American high schools were failing to respond to the needs of individual students.³⁹

In Fairfax County during the 1970s considerable attention was paid by Superintendent Davis to the local examples of the national concerns. Humanizing the inherent complexity and depersonalization of a school system of 135,000 students was a challenge. Communications, human relations, race relations, drug education, family life education, gifted education, decentralization, and other relevant programs were debated and implemented in an attempt by Dr. Davis and his school board to respond to the reform reports of the 1970s.⁴⁰

By the end of the seventies the view was changing, and critics of education were saying that schools did not have

³⁸B. Frank Brown, Chairman, National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, The Reform of Secondary Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1973), 10.

³⁹John Henry Martin, Chairman, National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education, The Education of Adolescents (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), 37.

⁴⁰Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meetings, 1970 - 1979."

sufficiently rigorous requirements, were weak in the quality of teachers and teaching, were not educating workers adequately, and were doing an especially poor job of teaching mathematics, science, and computer technology.⁴¹ This analysis is confirmed in noting that by the end of the 1970s a large clamor for minimum competency testing had led state after state (Virginia included) to enact legislative requirements for such tests. Educational groups frequently opposed such programs, but the public strongly approved them. In Virginia the General Assembly had mandated minimum competency testing prior to S. John Davis' appointment as superintendent of public instruction, and handling competency testing became Davis' first major hurdle as state superintendent.

In the early eighties business groups and economists began to undertake studies comparing American society and business practices with those of other countries. The reason for their concern was a feeling that other countries were surging ahead of the United States economically. These early studies found a strong link between the educational level of people and a country's ability to compete

⁴¹Dennis P. Doyle and Terry W. Hartle, "Leadership in Education: Governors, Legislators, and Teachers," Phi Delta Kappan 67 (September 1985), 23.

economically.⁴² As a result business leaders who had not paid much attention to the schools before began to issue reports calling for the reform of American education.

The most influential reform report was A Nation At Risk, issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Created by Secretary of Education Terrell Bell in 1981, the National Commission wrote a report that sparked much publicity, national debate, astonishing public demand for copies of the report, and wide-spread activities in every state in response.

A Nation At Risk: the Imperative for Educational Reform had three essential messages. First, the nation was at risk because competitors throughout the world were overtaking America's once unchallenged lead in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation.

Second, mediocrity, not excellence, was the norm in American schools. On nineteen international assessments of student achievement, United States students, when compared only with students of other industrialized nations, ranked in last place seven times and never first or second. From 1963 to 1980 a virtually unbroken decline took place in scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Between 1975 and 1980 the number of remedial mathematics courses offered in

⁴²John F. Jennings, "The Sputnik of the Eighties," Phi Delta Kappan 69 (October 1987), 104.

four year public colleges increased by seventy-two percent; and about one-fourth of the recruits to the armed forces were only able to read at the ninth grade level, the minimum to follow safety instructions. Also, some twenty-three million American adults were considered functionally illiterate and not able to fit into the modern work force.

Third, this country did not have to tolerate this situation for "America can do better, should do better, and must do better."

The Commission made five broad recommendations:

(1) Content--All students seeking a high school diploma should be required to lay a foundation in "five new basics" by taking four years of English, three years of mathematics, three years of science, three years of social studies, and one-half year of computer science. Also, foreign languages, fine and performing arts, and vocational education should be emphasized and improved.

(2) Standards and expectations--More should be required and expected of American students. More homework and more math and science should be required. Open admission regardless of courses or grades should be discontinued by four-year colleges and universities, and more rigorous and measurable standards and higher expectations for academic performance and student conduct should be implemented.

(3) Time--Because the mastery of curriculum is directly related to the amount of time students spend, more time should be devoted to learning the "five new basics." Consideration of a seven hour day and a two-hundred to two-hundred and twenty day school year should be given.

(4) Teaching--Persons preparing to teach must be required to meet high educational standards; teacher preparation programs must be upgraded; the professional working life of teachers must be improved; salaries for teachers should be professionally competitive; and promotion, tenure, retention and increases in pay should be tied to an effective evaluation system that included peer review. Eleven month contracts, career ladders, incentives, and master teacher programs should be available as well.

(5) Leadership and Fiscal Support--Citizens must hold education and elected leaders responsible for providing leadership required to bring about these reforms and must provide the fiscal support and stability necessary for implementation. The leadership role of principals and superintendents; the role of local, state, and federal governments; and the need for parents, public officials, and educators to assist cooperatively in instituting the

proposed reforms were also evaluated and promulgated.⁴³

In Virginia A Nation At Risk solidified S. John Davis' thinking and approach to educational reform. With a board of education member, Mrs. Margaret Marston of Arlington, a member of the national panel that wrote A Nation At Risk and with Governor Charles Robb and Governor Gerald Baliles taking active interest in educational reform, much of Dr. Davis' agenda as state superintendent was set by school reform and the need to answer the critics of public education.

Management Theory

One final historical trend that affected Dr. Davis' leadership was in the area of management theory and its development. Three major periods of management theory history can be identified. The first period dominated by scientific management and bureaucracy was prevalent from 1910 to 1935. Max Weber, the German sociologist contributed to the first fully formulated theory of bureaucracy, a descriptive term for characterizing formal, large-scale organizations. Frederick W. Taylor, the "father of scientific management," advanced the professionalization of

⁴³Milton Goldberg and James Harvey, "A Nation at Risk: The Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education," Phi Delta Kappan 64 (September 1983), 14-18.

management. Weber emphasized the legal domination of "role" or position in a status hierarchy. Taylor stressed the impersonal rationality of measurement. Classical organizational theory developed from these roots. Assumptions about human nature described man as unpredictable and unstable. The conflict between man and the organization was settled in favor of the organization.⁴⁴

The second group of theories which thrived from 1938 to 1950 represented the human relations approach. The dominant focus of the organization was transformed from a rational model free from the friction of man's emotions to a model which was less mechanistic. This school of thought took cognizance of workers' feelings, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, ideas, and sentiments. Elton Mayo, Kurt Lewin, and Carl Rogers were proponents of this approach. For the human relations model there was no essential conflict between man and organization. Satisfying workers' social and psychological needs was entirely congruent with the organization's goals of effectiveness and productivity.⁴⁵

After 1950 a number of authors attempted to reconcile and integrate classical and modern organizational theory. Warren Bennis, Chester Barnard, and Douglas McGregor--all

⁴⁴Warren C. Bennis, Changing Organizations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 66-67.

⁴⁵Ibid., 68.

read and studied by Jack Davis--were among these revisionists. They recognized clearly that organizational theory must take into consideration such factors as purpose and goal, status and power differentials, and hierarchy. The revisionists also were concerned with external economic factors, with productivity and formal status, but not to the exclusion of the human elements that the traditional theorists neglected. Rewards and punishment, for example, were replaced by objective stress on organizational purpose and attainment. Trading, negotiating, and accommodations were necessary to realize a true integration. Problem orientation, basis in science, collaborative relationship with clients, and systems analysis were all part of this theory."

Warren Bennis focused on the ways behavioral scientists can illuminate and direct processes of change in organizations. Among Bennis' ideas that impacted Davis' thinking and became a part of his managerial lexicon were the following components of planned organizational change: (1) integration of individual needs and management goals through a humanistic, democratic approach; (2) using collaboration to manage and resolve conflicts; (3) adaptation by responding appropriately to changes induced by

"Ibid., 69, 77, 85.

environment in a planned scientific way; and (4) revitalization, defined as handling rapid changes in tasks, manpower, raw materials, and goals of the enterprise and society by constant revision.⁴⁷

Chester Barnard's book formulated a theory of cooperation and organization and studied the functions and methods of operation of executives in formal organizations. Barnard's ideas included his belief that a formal organization was a "system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more persons." Cooperation was effective if the recognized objectives of the cooperative action were accomplished. Efficiency related to the satisfaction of individual motives, and the cooperative system had to create a surplus of satisfaction to be efficient.⁴⁸

Barnard suggested that the essential executive functions were threefold: (1) to provide the system of communication, (2) to promote the securing of essential efforts, and (3) to formulate and define the purpose of the organization. A secondary function of executive organization was to promote the securing of the personal services

⁴⁷Ibid., 69-71.

⁴⁸Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), 55-58.

that constituted the material of the organization. Barnard divided this aspect of the executive's work into two main divisions: (1) the bringing of persons into cooperative relationships with the organization and (2) the eliciting of the services after such persons have been brought into the organization.⁴⁹

Douglas McGregor's chief contribution to Jack Davis' theory of management was his conceptualization of Theory X and Theory Y. Theory X leaders used tactics of control--procedures for telling people what to do and techniques to determine whether they are doing it--and rewards and punishments. Their assumption was that people must be made to do what is necessary. Theory Y leaders were preoccupied with the nature of relationships and with creating an environment which encouraged commitment to organizational objectives. They provided for the exercise of initiative, ingenuity, and self-direction in achieving organizational objectives.⁵⁰ Jack Davis saw himself as a practitioner of Theory Y.⁵¹

The writings of Bennis, Barnard, and McGregor were

⁴⁹Ibid., 217-227.

⁵⁰Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), 132.

⁵¹Kinnahan, 22 and S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

influential in shaping many of Dr. Davis' management beliefs. Davis believed in humanizing large, impersonal bureaucracies. He wanted employees to be self-directed within the framework of managerial goals which were developed in a consultative manner. He emphasized communication, cooperation, testing to determine results, and building an environment conducive to the fulfillment of organizational objectives.

Although S. John Davis was influenced by the thinking of the revisionists, his career as an educational manager also shows the imprint of the classical management theorists and the human relations philosophers.

Summary

S. John Davis held leadership positions of importance in education in five distinct eras. He became division superintendent of Fairfax County, Virginia's largest local school system, in 1970 and was appointed superintendent of public instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1979 by Governor John N. Dalton. He served as the state's chief school officer during the administrations of Governor Charles S. Robb and Governor Gerald L. Baliles. He then retired from office shortly after the inauguration of Governor L. Douglas Wilder in 1990 and subsequently worked as an educational consultant and served as a political

advisor.

Dr. Davis' career as an educational leader will be described in this study through the analysis of five reoccurring themes: politics, funding, educational initiatives, accountability, and management theory and practice. Further understanding of Davis' career as an educator will be derived from the personal, educational, professional, and historical influences that impacted his life and work.

The purposes of this study are fourfold: (1) to present a thematic history of S. John Davis' career as superintendent of public instruction, (2) to examine the underlying factors that shaped Davis' philosophy and his educational programs, (3) to provide insight into the complexities of the role of the state superintendent of public instruction in relation to other government entities at all levels, and (4) to describe Davis' educational legacy.

Chapter 2

THE FAIRFAX YEARS, 1958-1979

From Teacher to Administrator

Arlington County

S. John Davis spent his first nine years as a professional educator in Arlington County, Virginia. He worked as a science teacher at Stratford Junior High School for five years and developed a reputation as a classroom teacher who maintained excellent discipline and knew his subject matter well. He was seen as a promising, intelligent, ambitious young educator.¹

Jack Davis met Janet Colson in the summer of 1951 when he worked as the director of a day camp for the Washington, District of Columbia, Recreation Department and she was a camp counselor. When the two returned to their respective teaching jobs in the fall, they began dating and were married June 14, 1952. Jan resigned from the Washington, DC, school system and obtained an elementary school teaching position in Arlington County. She taught until the Davises began a family in 1955. Four children--Lisa, October 18, 1955; Kara, April 24, 1958; John, September 26, 1963; and Megan, September 10, 1965--were born to Jack and Jan, and she became a full-time mother and homemaker.

¹James W. Tyler, telephone conversation with author, 29 September 1993.

Encouraged by Jan and by Doris Mortimer Matthews, his assistant principal at Stratford Junior High, Jack enrolled in graduate school, taking classes in the summer and at night during the school year. He received his master's degree in school administration in 1955 from George Washington University and applied for an assistant principal's job in Arlington County.²

In the summer of 1955 James W. Tyler, who later served as superintendent of Richmond City Schools, was appointed principal of the new Kenmore Junior High School and began interviewing candidates for the assistant principalship. From a pool of eligible candidates, Tyler selected Jack Davis to be his assistant. He saw Jack as a bright, articulate young man who knew the junior high program. That knowledge would be helpful to Tyler, who came to his new position from an elementary school principalship. Tyler assigned young Davis duties overseeing discipline, instruction, and the athletic program. Because Davis knew the junior high school grading system, he took the leadership role in helping the faculty become oriented to that grading system. He was a hard worker, a good organizer, and he worked well with teachers in the school. Students liked him but also called him "Old Davis" as they

²S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992 and Janet Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

reacted to his work as a disciplinarian.³

The Private Academy

In 1958 S. John Davis applied for and was offered the job as director of Flint Hill Preparatory School, grades K-9, in Oakton, Virginia. Davis had arrived in Fairfax County but in the private sector, not the public one. The position paid \$9,000 a year in salary for the director to administer both school year and summer programs.⁴ Jack's move to Flint Hill occurred after he became acquainted with the founders of the school who ran the summer camp that he had directed. Being head man in his own school and improving his personal financial situation were important factors in Davis' decision to take the position.⁵

In 1958 Flint Hill had ninety students in K-9; in 1963 when Jack Davis left to return to public education in Fairfax County, the school had grown to six hundred and seventy students in K-12 and postgraduate programs. Director Davis' mission at Flint Hill was to expand and develop a sound financial base for the school. The

³Tyler, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993.

⁴S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

⁵Tyler, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993 and Janet Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

substantial growth in enrollment solidified the financial situation, and Flint Hill's tuition-support program for financial need and for minorities helped the school broaden its mission.

Davis' directorship of Flint Hill Preparatory School was very helpful to his development as an administrator. It taught him a great deal about the total management of an educational institution. In today's discourse on educational management, Flint Hill was site-based at a fundamental level. Davis' responsibilities were numerous, including ensuring that the payroll was covered and funds were managed properly. He even oversaw buying horses for the riding program. When Davis left Flint Hill, he was managing a fleet of thirty buses. This K-12 experience was good for Davis in that it added an elementary and a secondary school experience to his junior high school knowledge base.'

Fairfax County

While S. John Davis was preoccupied with private school education, Fairfax County was continuing its rapid growth which proceeded unabated from the end of World War II until the early 1970s. Before the war there were 4,000

'S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

students in Fairfax County in 1930 and nearly 7,000 in 1940.⁷ By 1950 the county had 24 schools which enrolled nearly 17,000 students; by 1960 enrollment had jumped to 59,800 students; and by 1970, 133,000 students were in 162 schools. During the twenty year span from 1950 to 1970 the growth exceeded 6,000 new students per year.⁸

By 1963 Jack Davis was ready to return to the public sector. Believing that more opportunities were available in rapidly growing Fairfax County, Davis took a reduction in salary when he became the assistant principal for instruction at Fort Hunt High School. When George Gibbs, principal at Fort Hunt, was invited to Vietnam to serve as a consultant for a United States government education training program, Jack became acting principal for a number of months.

Earl Funderburke, Fairfax County's superintendent, had told Davis that if he would serve as assistant principal for one year, he would then be appointed to a principalship. At the time Davis preferred instruction, and when the West Springfield principalship became open, he did not apply

⁷Tonya Sanders, "How It Was for Teachers in '29: W.T. Woodson Reflects on His Superintendency," Fairfax (Virginia) Star, 16 May 1979, sec. Fx, 1.

⁸S. John Davis, "The Grass Is Not Always Greener," Public Education in Virginia 13-2 (Summer 1977), 5.

because he was happy in his instructional role. Then, William J. Burkholder, an assistant to Funderburke, called Davis and said, "The job is yours if you want it and apply."⁹

After reconsidering, Davis did apply. He became principal of West Springfield High School in 1965. West Springfield was a new school in a fairly affluent area of Fairfax County, and Jack Davis handled this assignment well. The school's SAT scores were excellent and other achievement test scores were equally good. His rapport with the community was strong; his style was informal, sincere, and considerate.¹⁰

With the spectacular growth of Fairfax County and its school system, a decentralized movement was implemented by Superintendent Funderburke and the school board. In the fall of 1967 the Fairfax County School Board approved decentralizing the administration of two of the most densely populated areas of the county. Area I, which included Mount Vernon, Fort Hunt, Groveton, and Edison high schools and their feeder intermediate and elementary schools, and Area II, which included Jefferson, Stuart, Lee, Annandale, and

⁹S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

¹⁰Barry S. Morris, telephone conversation with author, 29 September 1993.

Falls Church high schools and their feeder intermediate and elementary schools were established. A third area was created in the 1968-69 budget, and a fourth area was added in the subsequent year.

The administrators of these new area offices and their assistants were charged directly with developing teaching and learning programs most desired and supported in their areas. They became front-line educational leaders for their particular communities. Assignments of area administrators included curriculum development and continuity, grades K-12; school attendance boundaries; and student transportation. This shift meant a change of emphasis in the role of central administration, which allowed more time for planning long-range goals and policies.

On December 1, 1967, Fairfax County Superintendent E. C. Funderburke announced the appointment of Robert E. Phipps and S. John Davis as Area I and Area II administrators respectively. Dr. Arthurea B. Rubinowitz, Olde Creek Elementary School principal, was named Davis' assistant administrator.¹¹

According to Davis, "The deputy superintendent and the assistant superintendent both came to talk to me about my

¹¹Fairfax County School Board, "Fairfax County Names School Area Administrators" (Public Relations Office, Fairfax, 1 December 1967, photocopy).

interest in the position of area superintendent. They both indicated that the job would be mine if I wanted it. I was to be Earl Funderburke's person. Then, after my interview with Dr. Funderburke he asked me personally if I would accept."¹²

Jack Davis was thirty-eight years old and the father of four young children. He was now a part of the established leadership team that had been developed by Superintendent Funderburke and was in the top echelon of management in the Fairfax County Public School System.

The Division Superintendency

Politics

In 1961 W. T. Woodson retired as superintendent of Fairfax County schools after having served in that position for thirty-two years. He began his tenure as superintendent of a sleepy, rural county with 4,000 students and saw it grow to a system serving 60,000 students by the time he left office.¹³ His immediate successor Earl C. Funderburke presided over a nine-year period that saw the system double in student population. Superintendent Funderburke

¹²G. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

¹³Sanders, sec. Fx, 1.

concentrated on the building program as the county "built a classroom a day" during the 1960s.¹⁴ After Funderburke's resignation in 1969, the school board conducted an extensive search for his replacement. A professional consultant from Harvard was hired to supervise a nationwide hunt which resulted in the Fairfax County School Board's hiring Dr. Lawrence M. Watts, an educator from Greece, New York.¹⁵

"Funderburke was enthralled with building a classroom a day. We turned to Watts for curriculum development and innovation. He was just starting to shake the system when he died,"¹⁶ said William S. Hoofnagle, a member of the school board that hired Watts.

After less than a year in office, Larry Watts died from a heart attack on June 15, 1970.¹⁷ Unexpectedly, the Fairfax County School System was in a state of flux. Its school board now had to recommence the search for a division superintendent that it had concluded a few months earlier.

¹⁴William S. Hoofnagle, telephone conversation with author, 20 February, 1993.

¹⁵John Goldsmith, telephone conversation with author, 4 February 1993.

¹⁶Megan Rosenfeld, "How Does A Good Guy Do So Well?" Washington Post, 6 July 1975, B-1.

¹⁷Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meetings," 1969-70, 18 June 1970.

Mary Anne Lecos, another board member who had voted to hire Watts, noted that at his death, "Watts was at the stage of taking things apart. A lot of principals had been transferred and morale was low."¹⁸ Therefore, it is not surprising that in seeking a replacement for Dr. Watts, board members decided that they wanted to preserve stability.¹⁹ Board members also agreed that since Watts was from out of the county, they should identify several people from within the Fairfax County school system capable of being superintendent.²⁰

The Hiring of a Superintendent

The school board immediately appointed Barry S. Morris, the assistant superintendent for finance and a man identified with the central office, as acting superintendent.²¹ Morris was closely associated with Larry Watts

¹⁸Mary Anne Lecos, telephone conversation with author, 24 May 1993.

¹⁹William Perlik, telephone conversation with author, 21 February 1993.

²⁰Goldsmith, telephone conversation, 4 February 1993.

²¹Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meetings, 1969-70," 25 June 1970.

and seemed to be the person in the office with the most hands-on experience.²² Morris became an active candidate for the superintendent's position, and it appeared to many, especially those among the senior staff, that he would be a strong possibility for the permanent appointment. Sam Coffey, the associate superintendent, also became a candidate, and the senior staff divided into two camps--those who supported Barry Morris and those who supported Sam Coffey.²³

Although the school board conducted a national search and brought several outsiders in for interviews, the feasibility of appointing an insider remained constantly on the minds of school board members. It finally became the sense of the board that they identify three or four people from within the Fairfax County Public School System to consider. The previously mentioned Morris and Coffey along with Emory Chesley, another senior staff member and assistant superintendent for administration, were interviewed. However, several board members also thought of

²²Goldsmith, telephone conversation, 4 February 1993.

²³Mike Cale, interview by author, Roanoke, Virginia, 26 April 1993.

Jack Davis, the Area II Superintendent, as a possibility.²⁴ John Goldsmith, chairman of the Fairfax County School Board, approached Davis and asked why he was not a candidate. Davis explained to the chairman that since he had not finished his doctorate he thought he should concentrate on his graduate work before seeking a superintendency.

About a week after the initial conversation with Goldsmith, the chairman called Davis and said, "The board wants to talk to you." A meeting was set up and the school board met with Jack Davis for four hours in an informal meeting.²⁵

Apparently that meeting was a successful one for Davis, because the board then began considering him very seriously. Mary Anne Lecos, the board member from the Mason District inside the beltway, realized that her district had undergone much demographic change. She had decided that it would be important to have someone as superintendent who was aware of poverty and students who needed English as a second language. John Goldsmith, the board chairman, was from the Lee District, which was also changing, and he too was looking for a person who knew and understood the changes

²⁴Goldsmith, telephone conversation, 4 February 1993.

²⁵S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

taking place in Fairfax County and the implications of these changes for the schools. Area II, which was administered by Jack Davis as area superintendent, covered Mason and Lee districts.²⁶

Board members also saw Davis as being practical, having common sense and integrity, and being capable of serving as an effective spokesman to the public and to the county government.²⁷ Additionally, Jack Davis moved to the forefront when the board decided that it was looking for someone who could relate to people, to principals, to staff, to the community and be open and clear with everyone.²⁸

Chairman Goldsmith returned to Jack Davis again with the news that the Fairfax board wanted his credentials submitted to the Virginia Board of Education to be included on the eligibility list for local division superintendents. Jim Ross, who had been Larry Watts' administrative assistant, was sent to Richmond to take care of the details; subsequently, Davis' name was added to the eligibility list.

John Goldsmith then came to Davis and indicated that Jack as a "non-candidate" was the only in-house person that

²⁶Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

²⁷Perlik, telephone conversation, 21 February 1993.

²⁸Morris, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993.

the board could agree on. The board agreed to help Jack with back-up assistance on his dissertation, and the decision was finalized.²⁹

As one staff member reported the scene, "One day in September the senior staff was called into the board room for an announcement. The door opened and in came John Goldsmith with Jack Davis. Mr. Goldsmith said, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, I want you to meet the new division superintendent, Jack Davis.' You could have heard a pin drop."³⁰

On October 15, 1970, the Fairfax County School Board unanimously approved S. John Davis as division superintendent with his appointment made effective September 23, 1970. Davis' initial appointment was to complete Larry Watts' term which had a June 30, 1973, expiration date. The chairman welcomed Mr. Davis to his new role with the board. Superintendent Davis responded that the past few weeks had been exciting and he had spent considerable time learning a great deal about the

²⁹S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

³⁰Cale, interview, 26 April 1993.

intricacies of the superintendency.³¹

Local Government

John Goldsmith, chairman of the school board that hired Jack Davis as superintendent, indicated that the selection of the superintendent was not political in a partisan way. One's status as a Democrat or a Republican was not asked.³² William Hoofnagle, who served on the school board when Larry Watts was hired and later served as chairman of the board of supervisors, confirmed that while the board of supervisors was very political, the school board was not as partisan. The board of supervisors in Fairfax County in the 1960s and 1970s tended to appoint school board members and then let them alone.³³

Jack Davis worked at the political aspect of education and cultivated the right people. He and his wife Jan went out to dinner with board chairman John Goldsmith and his wife and another couple before Jack was considered as

³¹Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meetings, 1970-71," 15 October 1970.

³²Goldsmith, telephone conversation, 4 February 1993.

³³Hoofnagle, telephone conversation, 20 February 1993.

superintendent.³⁴ Board members and co-workers have noted his political astuteness. William Hoofnagle described Jack Davis as a good politician in the sense that he was working to advance his career. Davis' presentations to the board of supervisors were good. Even though the supervisors and school board usually had a big hassle over the budget, Dr. Davis was persuasive and able.³⁵ Connie Johnson, a former human relations office administrator in Fairfax County, believed that Jack Davis was a brilliant politician-- "natural, not consciously political." While Dr. Watts had been somewhat controversial, Jack Davis was a master of public relations and proved to be a super salesman for his ideas and programs.³⁶

Jack Davis mastered political survival as he worked with subsequent school boards after his initial appointment. He was reappointed unanimously in 1973 and again in 1977. His working relationship with the school board was excellent. He tried to find out what board members thought

³⁴Goldsmith, telephone conversation, 4 February 1993.

³⁵Hoofnagle, telephone conversation, 20 February 1993.

³⁶Connie Johnson, telephone conversation with author, 20 February 1993.

and what they needed.³⁷ He also had the ability to forge compromises that were "win win." He paid attention to what was said by people. Davis also commanded a great deal of loyalty from his staff. Yet, he let staff take the lead in controversial topics. He would sit with the school board, and staff would make presentations and recommendations to the school board and to Jack.³⁸

During his years as a Fairfax County administrator and especially as superintendent, Dr. Davis was not a partisan politician; his partisan politics were relegated to the voting booth. No mention was made of political affiliation by any school board member under whom Davis served. In truth, Jack Davis' parents had both been Republicans; and had he been active in party politics in Fairfax County, he would have been a Republican although his wife Jan was a Democrat.³⁹ Education did come first, however, and partisan politics did not play a role in school board business.

³⁷Perlik, telephone conversation, 21 February 1993.

³⁸Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

³⁹Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

Employees

S. John Davis' political acumen was tested as he worked with unionization, unions, and union leaders after becoming superintendent. In response to an attempt to unionize bus drivers, Dr. Davis organized a Bus Drivers' Advisory Council which met regularly. He found that the drivers had legitimate gripes. If drivers were absent the day before a holiday, they did not get paid for the holiday. The policy was rigid; there was no appeal. Jack Davis asked the school board to change the policy so that illness and other justified reasons for an absence would not cost drivers' holiday pay. Drivers were responsible for washing their own buses, but there were no school bus washing facilities. Bus washing facilities were ordered installed by the superintendent so that drivers could more easily keep their buses properly cleaned. Reacting positively to demonstrated needs of bus drivers, Davis built a more harmonious relationship between management and labor, and attempts to unionize drivers by both the Teamsters and the Amalgamated Transit Workers failed in votes by the drivers during Davis' tenure.⁴⁰

Dr. Davis also organized a School Secretaries' Advisory Council and helped secretaries get what they wanted most--

⁴⁰S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

respect and status for the work they did and recognition of their value to the school division. For example, a directory of school board positions published by the central office did not include secretaries' names. They wanted their names listed, and Dr. Davis helped accomplish that small but important objective.

Dr. Davis also organized a Teachers' Advisory Council after collective bargaining in the state was struck down by the Virginia Supreme Court in 1977. The highlight of negotiations during the Davis administration was the successful negotiation of an early retirement program and a sick leave bank, both supported by the superintendent.

Dr. Davis used the negotiating process, but he saw problems with the whole concept of collective bargaining. The American Federation of State and Municipal Employees (AFSME), the custodians' union, once negotiated an agreement calling for five cents more per hour differentiated pay for night shift custodians. However, each school traditionally left a meal valued at two dollars in an oven for the night custodians. That two dollar meal was lost in the process. Dr. Davis recommended, and the board approved, a twenty-five cents per hour increase in pay for custodians in place of the lost hot meal. Politically, this action was a good move with support personnel.

The Public

From 1972 to 1975 three bond proposals were offered to the voters of Fairfax for school improvement. Renovation and construction of schools and special education facility needs were targeted by Dr. Davis and the school board. Intensive campaigns were waged to secure approval to sell bonds to fund these needs. However, all three bond referenda were defeated at the polls. As Dr. Davis said after the third loss in June of 1975, "I've lost three school construction bond referendums [sic]. Actually, I'm not sure if it's a lack of communication or a sign of the times."⁴¹

Perhaps a better harbinger of Davis' political approach in Fairfax County was the relationship that he had with the conservative Fairfax County Taxpayer's Alliance. Harley Williams, president of the taxpayer's group, criticized just about every aspect of county government including the schools. But even Williams admitted that "considering the forces he's had to deal with, he's a pretty good superintendent. At least you can talk to him. He's not one of these totalitarian ideologues."⁴²

An example of how Davis worked with public pressure

⁴¹Rosenfeld, "How Does a Good Guy Do So Well?" B-1.

⁴²Ibid.

groups was a lengthy letter in the Northern Virginia Sun, July 26, 1975. Davis was replying to a July 9 letter from Harley Williams in which he directed several questions to the staff of the school system. Dr. Davis' reply was a model of reasoned response. He answered each question carefully with facts and with projected future actions. He closed by writing, "On a personal note, your comments in the Washington Post article were appreciated. On my part, I certainly intend to continue our relationship as it has been in the past and trust that we can always work in an atmosphere where 'at least you can talk to him.'"⁴³

State Consideration

When Woodrow W. Wilkerson announced his retirement as Virginia's Superintendent of Public Instruction effective April 1, 1975, the political process swirled around S. John Davis as Governor Mills E. Godwin considered a replacement. For the first time Dr. Davis' name was tossed around the state political arena and batted up and down the halls of power in Richmond. His work in Fairfax County, the state's largest school system, assured his being considered by the governor for appointment as the Commonwealth's top public

⁴³S. John Davis, "Davis Defends Schools," Northern Virginia Sun, 26 July 1975.

education officer.

According to the Richmond Times-Dispatch in late March of 1975, Davis "has to be a top contender in Virginia because he's a silky-smooth administrator of the biggest and certainly one of the best systems in this state."⁴⁴

Charles Cox, the education writer for the Times-Dispatch, noted that George N. Smith, superintendent in Mesa, Arizona, and Jack Davis were the top two contenders with Superintendent William J. Ellena of Charlottesville, Virginia, another front-runner. The ultimate appointee, Dr. Walter E. Campbell, the superintendent of schools in Henrico County, was not mentioned in pre-appointment speculation in the media.

An education writer for the Washington Post also confirmed Davis' being under consideration for the state's top job in education and added that Davis had corroborated: "If the governor decided that I would be of service to the state, and we agreed on salary and so forth, I would take the job."⁴⁵

Jack Davis was approached by the governor's search

⁴⁴Charles Cox, "State Looking at 3 for Top School Job," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 March 1975, sec. B, 1.

⁴⁵Megan Rosenfeld, "Area School Chief in Line for Virginia Job," Washington Post, 26 March 1975, sec. B, 1.

committee in January 1975. Carter O. Lowance, acting secretary of education, and Richard P. Gifford of Lynchburg, a state board of education member, interviewed top candidates like Davis and Smith of Arizona. However, Davis had a political liability that gave Governor Godwin considerable concern. Fairfax County and several other political subdivisions in Virginia were engaging in collective bargaining with teachers. When Davis met with Carter Lowance and later with Godwin himself to discuss the state superintendency, collective bargaining was a topic of much interest. Although Davis assured the governor that his participation in the bargaining process in Fairfax County would not cause him to promote such activity on a state-wide level,⁴⁶ Governor Godwin, the quintessential conservative, chose to appoint the safer, more conservative Dr. W. Eugene Campbell, superintendent of Henrico County, to head K-12 education in Virginia.

To underscore his opposition to collective bargaining, Governor Godwin had the Attorney General bring suit for the Commonwealth to prohibit local government bodies and school boards from entering into collective bargaining agreements with labor unions as exclusive representatives of county public employees. The motions for the Commonwealth of

⁴⁶S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

Virginia were filed in the Circuit Court of Arlington County, one of the seven jurisdictions which permitted bargaining, against the county's board of supervisors and school board. After Arlington County Circuit Court Judge Charles H. Duff granted summary judgment in favor of the county, the Commonwealth appealed to the Supreme Court of Virginia. On January 14, 1977, the Supreme Court ruled that localities could not enter into collective bargaining agreements with recognized labor organizations.⁴⁷

Dr. Davis, the Fairfax County School Board, and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors were not parties to the Commonwealth's suit. Arlington County had borne the brunt of the attack on the localities that were engaged in collective bargaining. Fairfax County, of course, had to cease its bargaining activities immediately.

In May 1979, just before Dr. Davis left Fairfax County, the Attorney General of Virginia ruled that Fairfax County's alternative to collective bargaining--a system of consultation between administrators and faculty that Davis had helped devise--must be modified, because it smacked too much of collective bargaining.⁴⁸

⁴⁷Commonwealth of Virginia v. the County Board of Arlington County, 217 VA 558, 232 S.E. 2nd 30 (1977).

⁴⁸Christopher Hanson, "Davis Reflects on 9 Years as Schools' Head," Washington Star, 27 May 1979, sec. Fx, 3.

Politically, S. John Davis had been evaluated and found lacking proper conservative credentials. As Davis himself acknowledged when he was finally selected for the state superintendency, "Four years ago I was passed over because I seemed a maverick whose associations on the state level were few and whose philosophy wasn't known."⁴⁹

Statewide Visibility

Jack Davis set about to build his associations on the state level. In 1977 he became president of the Virginia Association of School Administrators (VASA), an organization dominated by division superintendents. Jerry L. Austin, superintendent of Mecklenburg County Schools, said that Davis was initially perceived as "an auslander, a northerner," but other superintendents indicated that they were pleased with Davis' leadership in VASA. At the same time Davis was serving as president of the state school administrators' organization, Mary Anne Lecos, chairman of the Fairfax County School Board, was serving as president of the Virginia School Boards Association. Superintendent Austin told a reporter in 1977 that while Dr. Davis and Mrs. Lecos cannot divorce themselves from Fairfax County, they

⁴⁹Terry Franklin, "Jack Davis: He Battled with the State Board Until It Hired Him," The Executive Educator 1-9 (September 1979): 15.

are now speaking for the whole state.⁵⁰ Jack Davis' leadership role with the Virginia Association of School Administrators and the relationships he developed with superintendents across the state gave him statewide visibility.

On December 9, 1977, Davis appeared before the board of education to ask that the department of education conduct a study to determine the appropriate governing body for the Virginia High School League. Dr. Davis also presented a resolution from the Martinsville City School Board in support of his request.⁵¹

On February 9, 1978, Dr. Davis testified before the Committee on Education of the Virginia House of Delegates to express concern with regard to the operation of the Virginia High School League. He and his school board were concerned with the Virginia High School League's failure to have "avenues for parent and citizen input into the establishment of the rules and regulations which govern the athletic and

⁵⁰Robert Pear, "Northern Virginia Schools Get Some Recognition from the State," Washington Star (n.d., 1977), sec. B, 1. (From undated copy in files, Fairfax County School Board, Public Relations Office.)

⁵¹S. John Davis, "Presentation to the State Board of Education" (Speech presented at the regular monthly meeting of the Virginia Board of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 9 December 1977), Davis' Private Papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

literary activities of Virginia students." Communication with and input from school boards and appellate procedures for those who are dissatisfied with league decisions were also cited as problems.⁵² The assumption of leadership on this issue was an indication of how Dr. Davis was taking on state-wide issues and building coalitions.

Davis' role as president of the Virginia Association of School Administrators gave him other valuable opportunities to speak for his colleagues across the state. On August 18, 1977, for example, he gave testimony before the Virginia Board of Education on the proposed 1978-80 biennial budget. Basing his remarks on decisions reached at an earlier statewide meeting of division superintendents, Dr. Davis testified, "We [superintendents] are extremely concerned...that the state's share of the cost of the Standards of Quality is not being recognized or funded." Davis also called for relaxing the standards to the extent that the true cost was not funded since local "budgets can no longer support the hidden costs of full compliance with

⁵²G. John Davis, "Presentation to the Committee on Education, Virginia House of Delegates" (Speech presented at a called meeting of the Education Committee of the Virginia House of Delegates, Richmond, Virginia, 9 February 1978), Davis' Private Papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

the standards."⁵³

In January, when the General Assembly was in session, Dr. Davis testified before the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee for VASA. Again, the thrust of his comments dealt with "unrealistic funding of the basic aid component of the Standards of Quality." Davis voiced his "strong opposition" to provisions in House Bill 30 that placed a ceiling on state contributions to teacher retirement and group life insurance plans, eliminated "no loss" stipulations to localities, and deleted the maximum increase provision which would force poorer counties suddenly to increase local support. He closed by asking the two committees to "establish a task force to validate the results of our [VASA] efforts to determine the realistic costs of meeting the SOQ, including a regional cost-of-living index [a VASA position]."⁵⁴

Power brokers in the General Assembly like Delegate Willard L. Lemmon, Senator Edward E. Willey, and Senator

⁵³S. John Davis, "Testimony before the State Board of Education on Proposed 1978-80 Biennium Budget" (Speech presented at the regular meeting of the Virginia Board of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 18 August 1977), Davis' Private Papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

⁵⁴S. John Davis, "Testimony before the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, Virginia General Assembly" (Speech presented at a joint meeting, Richmond, Virginia, 23 January 1978), Davis' Private Papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

Hunter Andrews saw Davis in a role broader than his usual northern Virginia proselytizing. Also, the Virginia Board of Education saw Davis in a state-wide role and not as a regional partisan. Later, when he came before Governor Dalton's State Superintendent Search Committee, he would benefit from the expanded image that he had projected.

As a political practitioner, Jack Davis was successful in Fairfax County. He worked cooperatively with the school board, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, his employees, and the public at large. He promulgated and implemented the programs that he believed Fairfax County schools needed. His reputation as an effective administrator grew, and he was praised as an able leader. Jack Davis practiced politics in an artful, pragmatic way and made it possible for the school system to improve during his nine-year tenure as its chief operating officer.

Funding

Making mistakes while dealing with educational finances often has the potential to inflict damage on a school administrator's career. In Jack Davis' career, however, his mastery of educational finances in Fairfax County enhanced his reputation as a solid educational administrator.

S. John Davis' first encounter with educational finance came as a junior high school teacher when his principal

Claude Richmond and assistant principal Doris Mortimer Matthews gave him some assignments out of the classroom that included the school's accounting and banking procedures.⁵⁵ As assistant principal, principal, and graduate student he also gained some knowledge and experience of school finances. However, it was not until he became Area II Superintendent in Fairfax County and began work on his doctorate at American University that he really immersed himself into school funding matters.

Programmed Budgeting

Fairfax County Public Schools began looking at its financial mechanisms near the end of Earl Funderburke's superintendency while Barry Morris was serving as assistant superintendent for finance. Morris had worked with a group that helped the United States Office of Education develop a manual on school finance and audits. In preparing this manual, Morris had also studied planning, programming, budgeting systems (PPBS) with consultants from the firm of Peat, Marwick, and Mitchell. Superintendent Funderburke and Morris were beginning to look at PPBS when Funderburke resigned and was replaced by Dr. Lawrence M. Watts.⁵⁶

⁵⁵S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

⁵⁶Morris, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993.

Dr. Watts brought Mike Cale from New York to be his chief financial officer. Cale was an ex-army man who had a master's degree from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania and was also a Certified Public Accountant. Cale recalled that Morris counseled against PPBS; however, Morris remembered that Cale had taken a different approach in developing PPBS than the one that he and Funderburke had begun. Watts and Cale had experience in implementing PPBS in Greece, New York, and began immediately to implement such a system in Fairfax County.⁵⁷

On August 29, 1968, a committee to study PPBS was approved by the Fairfax County School Board as recommended by Superintendent Funderburke. Watts and Cale would continue the committee with few changes when they arrived in Fairfax County in 1969. Jack Davis, Area II Superintendent, was placed on this committee;⁵⁸ and as the committee met weekly, Jack became more and more impressed with PPBS. He saw that programmed budgeting fit well into Fairfax County's new decentralized model. Davis' work on the budget study committee influenced him when it came time to select a topic

⁵⁷Cale, interview, 26 April 1993.

⁵⁸Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meetings," 1968-69, 29 August 1968.

for his doctoral dissertation,⁵⁹ and his finished dissertation was entitled Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems: A New Horizon in Public School Financial Management.

From the introduction to his dissertation we learn that Davis believed:

Accountability...can be achieved only through serious investigation of current budgetary procedures and a sincere willingness on the part of a school system to adjust. Although Program Budgeting may not be a panacea for all of the problems associated with planning and budgeting in public schools, in the opinion of the writer, the philosophy offers many of the necessary solutions.⁶⁰

Davis' problem as set forth in the dissertation was to determine the extent of implementation of PPBS in the fifteen largest public school districts in the United States and to develop guidelines and a model for implementation in a large school system.

Davis found that the PPBS model had made only a slight impact on schools nationally, but he concluded that the future of the system appeared bright. But more

⁵⁹S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

⁶⁰S. John Davis, Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems: A New Horizon in Public School Financial Management (Ed. D. diss., American University, 1971), 1.

importantly to this analysis, Davis was able to use the materials, research, and discussion of the PPBS Study Committee in Fairfax County as a model for his dissertation, and his appointment as county superintendent in 1970 led him to note, "The writer has been responsible for the actual implementation of PPBS in the Fairfax County Public School System."⁶¹ Jack Davis' doctoral dissertation thus became more than an academic exercise; it presented the actual guidelines for the development and implementation of PPBS in Fairfax County Public Schools.

Davis' model established four essential components of PPBS: preparatory planning, program structure, goals and objectives, and data measurement and analysis. Successful implementation of his operational PPBS model required completion of four identifiable stages: (1) program planning based on predetermined budget thrusts, (2) procedures for preparation and submission of budget requests, (3) plans for budget review and consolidation of priorities, and (4) production of a model PPBS for use within the school system and for public information.⁶²

⁶¹Ibid., 12.

⁶²Ibid., 86, 107.

"Commitment to Education"

On April 8, 1971, the Fairfax County School Board approved "Commitment to Education," Davis' planning instrument for PPBS. Immediate distribution to each school and to central and area offices signaled that the new model was in effect. "Commitment to Education" was developed by Davis and the PPBS Planning Committee to identify budget thrusts for the 1972-73 school year, based on the educational goals of the school system. Twenty-six quantifiable objectives were identified from which the program managers selected those which were most applicable to their individual schools. Forms were developed to facilitate each program manager's report of choice of objectives, work plans, performance indicators, and implementation schedules. Upon completion of these forms, the program manager next prepared and submitted the school's budget requests. The area superintendent then reviewed the requests before submitting them to the superintendent's office for final processing.

Regulation 2003 was issued from Dr. Davis' office May 5, 1971. This memo stated that the principals were to begin planning activities to implement "Commitment to Education" for the 1971-72 school year. This schedule would result in a programmed budget for the 1972-73 fiscal

year.⁶³

By June 1973 the new process was fully in place. Using post-innovation rhetoric, The Fairfax Schools Bulletin boasted proudly the following:

Since implementation of "Commitment to Education" and the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Evaluating System, the Business Affairs Department has played a leading role in providing training to our program managers; has made significant improvement in the overall management of our educational system; and has insured that financial management is well documented and accounted for and meets local requirements.⁶⁴

Fairfax County's newly implemented programmed budgeting system designated principals as program managers with each school defined as a program. Schools were funded on a per-pupil formula. Each principal who needed additional resources or personnel had to document that need. Then area superintendents reviewed requests and forwarded justified requests to the division superintendent. The attempt was to treat each school and the community it served individually.⁶⁵

Mike Cale, the assistant superintendent for finance who

⁶³Fairfax County School Board, "Regulation 2003," Superintendent's Office, 5 May 1971.

⁶⁴Staff, "Funds Management Expertise Necessary for Quality Schools," Fairfax Schools Bulletin 9-10 (June 1973), 1.

⁶⁵S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

came to Fairfax County with Larry Watts and then quickly gained Jack Davis' respect, provided the staff, computer, and logistical support for Fairfax's budgeting system. According to Cale, the actual development of the budget took place in the board room at the central office. The principal as program manager and his area superintendent presented and defended each school program to Superintendent Davis and his financial office staff. The budget was built according to the system from the bottom up. Such sessions would begin at 8:00 A.M. and go on all day until 5:00 P.M. or even until midnight. Dr. Davis was deeply involved in the process and seemed very perceptive as to the financial nuances highlighted in the process.

Superintendent Davis then worked closely with the school board to refine the budget for board approval. Also, Dr. Davis, Mike Cale, and other staff members went to Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and to various community organizations to explain the budget, to answer questions, and to get support for budget approval. Finally, the budget was presented to the board of supervisors for final action."

"Cale, interview, 26 April 1993.

Budget Growth

An analysis of the operating budgets for each year of Dr. Davis' superintendency shows that from 1970-71, his first year in office, until 1978-79, his last year as Fairfax's superintendent, both the operating budget and the amount spent per pupil more than doubled. In a state-wide comparison in 1977 near the end of Dr. Davis' tenure, Fairfax County ranked eighth in expenditures per pupil and seventh in the amount of local dollars spent on school operation while it only ranked thirty-third in the state in local property value per pupil. However, Dr. Davis was disappointed by what he saw as a change in the relative priority the county placed on public education. From 1974 to 1978 Fairfax County's general fund resources increased sixty-three percent while the school fund increased twenty-five percent. During the same four-year period the school operating fund increased fifty-five percent while the total operating expenses of the county increased sixty-two percent."

Teachers' salaries were usually in the top ten in the state in both minimum and maximum salaries. Average salaries of classroom teachers increased yearly during Davis' superintendency and were significantly higher than

"Davis, "The Grass Is Not Always Greener," 6.

the state average. In 1970-71, Davis' first year as Fairfax's superintendent, the average salary of classroom teachers was \$2,360 higher than the average state salary for classroom teachers. With his final budget as superintendent in Fairfax County for 1979-80, the difference had grown to \$5,607 in favor of Fairfax's teachers.

Table 1 shows the growth of the average salary of classroom teachers in Fairfax County during Davis' tenure as division superintendent. Table 2 shows the growth of expenditures for operations during the same time frame. Superintendent Davis' leadership in fiscal matters saw major increases in dollars for education in Fairfax County at a time when enrollment was decreasing.

The major exception to this record occurred in 1979 when the Fairfax Education Association (FEA) requested salary increases exceeding President Jimmy Carter's wage-price guidelines set to combat inflation. Davis and the school board approved a seven percent plus step increase; however, the board of supervisors approved a 5.15 percent cost-of-living pay increase for all county employees including teachers. The FEA voted a resolution of no-confidence in Dr. Davis, because he acquiesced, too readily they thought, to the supervisors' decision."

"S. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

Table 1

Average Salary of Classroom Teachers, 1970/71 - 1979/80

Year	Fairfax County	Virginia
1970-71	\$ 10,942	\$ 8,582
1971-72	11,728	9,084
1972-73	12,288	9,513
1973-74	12,936	9,919
1974-75	13,854	10,671
1975-76	15,221	11,302
1976-77	16,360	12,063
1977-78	17,305	12,558
1978-79	18,531	13,288
1979-80	19,686	14,079

Note: From Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, Numbers 5-15, 1970-71 through 1979-80.

Table 2

Expenditures for Operation of Schools in Fairfax County, 1970-71 through 1979-80

Year	Expenditures For Operation	Local Expenditures Operations
1970-71	113,194,696	72,186,388
1971-72	124,130,234	79,654,957
1972-73	138,731,958	91,410,321
1973-74	153,333,182	100,677,247
1974-75	174,831,498	116,577,727
1975-76	202,483,168	143,860,894
1976-77	219,703,213	156,272,556
1977-78	238,938,497	175,829,074
1978-79	257,834,287	168,968,360
1979-80	285,930,873	193,991,957

Note: From Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, numbers 5-15, 1970-71 to 1979-80.

When Davis left Fairfax County to go to Richmond, he was concerned about the funding of education in Fairfax County. Rampant inflation, the high cost of energy, and changes in Fairfax County itself caused him to urge the county's citizens to continue their high level of financial support. Throughout his tenure as division superintendent, Dr. Davis paid particularly close attention to financial matters. He developed a modern systems approach to budgeting; he was the chief spokesperson for his budgets both in the community and in the halls of government, and funding for Fairfax County Public Schools increased during the 1970's on a pace that was greater than the cost-of-living index for the decade. Even the protests and the no-confidence vote by the teachers had a positive impact on Davis' career. Although the vote of censure by the teachers hurt Davis personally, his actions were interpreted as a "hard stand against the teachers and...upheld his reputation as a tough administrator" with state officials including Governor John Dalton."

Educational Initiatives

When S. John Davis became superintendent of Fairfax

"Glenn Frankel and Ina Lee Selden, "Fairfax Superintendent Named to Top State Education Job," Washington Post, 19 May 1979, sec. A, 1.

County in 1970 following the death of Lawrence Watts, he had an opportunity to make an impact on the instructional program and complete the job Watts had been hired to do. Watts' predecessor, Earl Funderburke, had been more interested in the building program than the instructional program, or so believed most members of the Fairfax County School Board. Watts was hired as a curriculum and instructional expert and innovator, and he was moving personnel to facilitate the implementation of his instructional program when he suffered his fatal heart attack.⁷⁰

In addition to the uncertainty brought about by Watts' death, three other factors can be identified which resulted in an explosion of variations in the content and organization of instruction in the school system. In 1968 the line administration of the school division had been decentralized to form area offices, each of which was staffed by a superintendent and support personnel for most functions, including instruction. These instructional specialists operated as resources available for assistance to schools, but usually were not involved except by invitation or at the direction of the area superintendent when problems became apparent. Jack Davis, as one of the original area superintendents, saw first hand the effects of

⁷⁰Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

decentralization on the county-wide instructional program.

The influence of the movement nationally away from standardization in curriculum and methodology, along with the administrative changes described above, added to the fragmentation of the instructional program in Fairfax County schools in the late 1960s. Furthermore, school board and central office encouragement of innovation and federal support for a variety of programs increased the differences in curriculum in the school district and exacerbated support and control problems.⁷¹

Program of Studies

S. John Davis' first major challenge in instruction was to bring some cohesion to the differences in curriculum among schools in Fairfax County. His approach was to focus on the basic subjects and to have his staff develop grade-level objectives for each basic subject. In turn, these were combined into the Program of Studies, which became the instructional policy for Fairfax County Public Schools in 1971. In addition to objectives for every subject area, the Program of Studies was expanded to include criterion

⁷¹Mary Anne Lecos, Process Evaluation in Fairfax County Public Schools: A Description and Evaluation of the Program Audit of Instruction (Ed. D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1980), 6.

referenced tests based on these objectives, suggested teaching strategies, and specifications for instructional materials, equipment, and facilities.⁷²

Davis has noted that he developed the Program of Studies in Fairfax County because the school system did not "have a handle on when it was teaching certain reading skills, multiplication of fractions, and so forth."⁷³ Sensing that more structure was needed, Dr. Davis then combined the Program of Studies with PPBS and promulgated "Commitment to Education" as a management by objective (MBO) model for instruction.

S. John Davis' leadership in developing and implementing the Program of Studies for all subject areas in Fairfax County's schools preceded the Virginia Board of Education's adoption of a similar but modified plan for the state. In 1977 the state board approved the establishment of a Basic Learning Skills (BLS) program designed to improve elementary education. The Standards of Quality for 1976-78 called for the board to establish minimum statewide objectives for basic learning skills and to develop appropriate tests to determine mastery of the objectives. The Department of Education's Division of Elementary

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

Education prepared a series of 252 educational objectives covering reading, communication, and mathematics to be met in grades K-6. Local school divisions would begin using these objectives in the fall of 1978.⁷⁴ Fairfax County had had such a system in place for all subjects K-12 since 1971.

Dr. Davis believed that educators need the following:

...an established scale on which to judge each student and a written measure to gauge how one student compares to another. It's very quantitative. We need measures for performance in the classroom. My aim is to have the teacher look at a class and establish a work plan for each student.⁷⁵

Therefore, it is not surprising that when S. John Davis later went to Richmond as state superintendent, his first major instructional initiative would be to expand the BLS Program into a statewide Standards of Learning (SOL) Program, which was based upon Fairfax County's Program of Studies from the early 1970s.

Perhaps the most revealing description of Davis' instructional approach in Fairfax County can be found in an article that he wrote for the American School Board Journal in which he told why test scores, especially SAT scores,

⁷⁴Staff, "Board of Education Adopts Basic Learning Skills Objectives," Public Education in Virginia 13-2 (Summer 1977), 16.

⁷⁵Jane Sims, "Davis: Low-key Schools Chief," Fairfax Journal, 2 August 1973, sec. A, 1.

rose in Fairfax County in the 1970s while they were plummeting nationally. "Scores rose we believe because we made a systemwide commitment to an instructional program that emphasizes certain basic skills."⁷⁶

Davis listed eleven specifics of educational program development in Fairfax County that led to his school system's instructional success. The first, and most important, was the development of a management by objectives system. Each year the school board established overall priorities which translated to objectives and goals that became the basis for annual work plans. All staff from central office to individual teachers were involved in the process.

The second specific cited was the implementation of the Program of Studies, which Davis described as the "heart" of the curriculum. The Program of Studies provided a program description, instructional objectives, suggested organization and teaching strategies as well as evaluation and instructional materials for all subject areas, K-12.

The third specific cited was the evaluation component of the Program of Studies, for which the system was developing criterion-referenced tests for each basic

⁷⁶S. John Davis, "How One School System Raised Its SAT Scores," The American School Board Journal (February 1978), 38.

objective. With pre- and post-testing, how well students met objectives could readily be discerned.

Davis mentioned eight other strategies, which included annual academic competition in language arts and math, summer school programs focusing on both remedial and advanced language arts and math, item analysis of standardized tests to determine areas of weakness in curriculum, voluntary review programs in high schools during seventh period for juniors and seniors, inservice on developing positive attitudes toward tests and on the mechanics of testing, uninterrupted blocks of time for teaching the basics, an "error-free" writing program for students in grades 7-12, and a challenge to teachers to discard outmoded expectations and stereotypes that often contribute to failure by certain students.⁷⁷

Special Education

Dr. Davis' idea of having written work plans for regular education students was remarkably similar to individualized education plans which were required for handicapped students identified as being eligible for special education programs. Likewise, writing behavioral objectives for special education students had much in common

⁷⁷Ibid.

with grade-level objectives in the Program of Studies that Dr. Davis originated. The influence of special education was often evident in Davis' instructional emphasis while superintendent of Fairfax County schools.

When Jack Davis was first considered for the superintendent's position, special education advocates and parents supported him. At that time, a hearing-impaired class was the only offering for handicapped students in the county. As Area II Superintendent, Davis had a meeting (at their request) with eight mothers of Down's syndrome children; and because of Davis' support for a program for their children, these mothers gave support for him to school board members. One of Davis' first major actions as superintendent was to have the school board establish a committee to draw up a blue print for action for the education of handicapped children. A document of more than four hundred pages was developed, and Davis and the school board began implementing a five-year plan of action for special education.⁷⁸

It was common for Davis to make larger than usual (or expected) budget requests for special education programs. By 1972 Fairfax County, under Davis' leadership, was serving handicapped children with programs for hearing impaired,

⁷⁸S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

visually impaired, mentally retarded of all ranges, orthopedically impaired, multi-handicapped, and emotionally disturbed."⁷⁹ At the federal level, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, Public Law 94-142, mandating such services were not enacted until 1973 and 1975 respectively.⁸⁰

Although Virginia had required special education programs for the hearing impaired in 1968, legislation extending required service to all handicapped children and youth ages two through twenty-one was not approved until 1972. The Standards of Quality called for in Virginia's Constitution went into effect for the first time in the 1972-73 school year. One of these program standards required that special education be provided for handicapped children and youth.⁸¹ Fairfax County, urged on by S. John Davis' interest in handicapped children, was several years ahead of most of Virginia's school divisions in special education.

A little over a month after Dr. Davis became superin-

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Kern Alexander and M. David Alexander, American Public School Law (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1992), 366.

⁸¹Virginia Department of Education, "Handbook for Parents of Handicapped Children," Richmond, Virginia, 1977, 1.

tendent of Fairfax County, he and the school board asked the school system's Center for Effecting Educational Change (CEEC) to determine if a need for a learning disabilities program in Fairfax County Public Schools existed. The CEEC soon reported that there were significant individual differences in children and that many children had specific learning disabilities in one or more areas which interfered with their ability to succeed in school. By February 1971 a summer institute and a 1971-72 school-year plan with budget support had been approved by the superintendent and school board. In July 1971 a three-year developmental, elementary-based program was begun. This program included summer and school year components that incorporated one-on-one tutorial and small group instruction. Then, in September 1972 provisions for reading instruction for the learning disabled were added to the program at the request of Superintendent Davis.⁸²

By March of 1974 Davis was able to say that by the 1976-77 school year Fairfax County would offer a full continuum of special education services.⁸³ Other school

⁸²Ronald A. Dearden, "FCPS Learning Disabilities Program Development Taking Three Years," Fairfax Schools Bulletin, 9 (May 1973), 2.

⁸³S. John Davis, "Special Education Program Is Expanding in Exciting Ways," Fairfax Schools Bulletin, 10 (March 1974), 2.

systems in Virginia and across the nation were just beginning to develop programs to meet state and federal mandates.

Vocational Education

Another area of considerable interest to Dr. Davis in the instructional program was vocational education. Davis believed that vocational education had to relate directly to job opportunities and employer needs and must give "hands on," practical experience. Toward that end, Fairfax County's vocational education students designed and built a house that was then sold. Students and vocational teachers were transported to the construction site. Later, English and math teachers taught in portable classrooms on site. Distributive education students marketed the projects by designing brochures to promote the sale of the houses. With the success of the first house projects the program was expanded, and students built a conference center for Fairfax County's Park Authority. A gas station was purchased and became a learning laboratory for auto services students.⁸⁴ Other such opportunities were made available for students in carpet installation, horticulture, cosmetology, and virtu-

⁸⁴S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

ally every other vocational area.

Davis worked closely with business and industry in the county to obtain help for the site-based projects. In a letter to the citizens of Fairfax County in June of 1973, Dr. Davis thanked the members of the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and the business community for their support of education in general and vocational education in particular.⁵⁵ Davis also was the featured speaker at the Northern Virginia Builders Association in June of 1973 and discussed innovations in school building construction with the group.⁵⁶ Davis believed that on-site programs helped the school system and the business community by graduating "a better-qualified youngster who would better fit in your enterprise."⁵⁷

The final years of his superintendency in Fairfax County saw Davis combining his interest in special and vocational education as he worked to provide vocational education for handicapped students. During the 1978-79 school year, through a joint school and county effort, some

⁵⁵S. John Davis, "Letter to the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce," Northern Virginia Sun, 5 June 1973.

⁵⁶Staff, "Northern Virginia Builders' Association," Northern Virginia Sun, 22 June 1973.

⁵⁷Davis, "Letter to the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce."

fifty handicapped youngsters got jobs after finishing school. "I am committed to the philosophy that handicapped persons can be tax producers rather than tax consumers," Davis stated not long before he left Fairfax County."

English as a Second Language

Dr. Davis started the first English as a Second Language program in Fairfax County to provide for non-English speaking students who were coming to Northern Virginia in rather large numbers from the Far East, Latin America, and other areas of the world. The federal government through the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare pushed for school systems to teach non-English speaking students first in their own language. Davis believed that "public education is not intended to extend the culture of an individual born in another country." He wanted schools to provide the means for assimilation. With 6,000 foreign-born students in Fairfax County, Dr. Davis wanted English learned as soon as possible."

"Franklin, 16.

"Ibid, 15.

Error-Free Writing Program

Davis also received considerable attention for his implementation of an error-free writing program for grades 7-12. Every nine weeks students had to turn in a composition representing their best writing. Intensive classroom brainstorming, rewriting, and teaching of writing skills went into developing the finished product. Davis personally read and commented on one hundred and fifty of the compositions each quarter."⁹⁰

Academically Unsuccessful Students

Jack Davis was also interested in identifying characteristics of academically unsuccessful students and in developing guidelines for working with them. He led Fairfax County in such a study and concluded that while the study did result in the identification of characteristics of unsuccessful students and in enabling schools to plan programs of special assistance early in the students' educational program, it did not address the impact of teachers' expectations of students. Davis believed that evidences of the existence of unfounded expectations influenced schools daily. He noted, "We expect girls to excel in language arts, boys in math and science. Students

⁹⁰Ibid, 17.

from poor homes are expected to enter vocational courses and perhaps drop out."¹

In a letter to county citizens Davis further added, "Young people finding themselves in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust may respond in such a manner as to become suspicious and untrustworthy themselves." He challenged parents, citizens, and colleagues to expect the best. Davis' Error-free Writing program was issued with the idea that "if we are willing to accept from students written assignments that contain misspelled words, grammatical errors, and flaws in punctuation, then this is exactly what we will receive."²

Leadership in Educational Issues and Innovations

Although Jack Davis spoke often of the basics and how "we must get back to basics and teach all to read as well as we teach advanced English courses available for college credit,"³ he was also mindful of the need in Fairfax

¹S. John Davis, "What Do You Expect," The School Administrator (January 1977), 18.

²S. John Davis, "Letter to the Editor," The Braddock (Virginia) Buoy, 4 August 1977.

³S. John Davis, "Fairfax County Schools: A Look to the Future," Fairfax County Police Association Sentinel (spring 1977), 1.

County to be a pacesetter in educational practices. To this end, Davis was a supporter of innovation in instruction and supported team teaching and open education. Several open space schools, including high schools, were built during Davis' tenure as superintendent. Environmental education was also stressed, and an underground high school was built in Reston to demonstrate how schools of the future might be constructed to deal with the energy crisis of the 1970s.

However, according to a former school board chairman, Dr. Davis' desire for Fairfax County to be a leader led him to encourage competition among the four areas in developing innovative programs. This competition made it difficult to plan division-wide and caused much staff time to be spent on turf issues. In a way the four areas acted like separate school systems in analysis of instruction, focus on educational technology, and other significant instructional issues.⁹⁴

Superintendent Davis and the Fairfax County School Board were willing to challenge both the state and federal educational establishments if they did not approve of instructional policies. Dr. Davis often complained about the lack of direction for special education classes. He considered an easing of state regulations for screening

⁹⁴Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

handicapped students as a major victory."⁵

In other arenas Davis and the school board sought to loosen state regulations as well. He was adamantly opposed to the state's treatment of academically gifted students who left high school early and went to college. Local school boards were prohibited from giving high school diplomas to these students even if they fulfilled high school graduation requirements in college. He also had the Fairfax County School Board increase requirements in social studies over and above state requirements."⁶

Additionally, Davis and the Fairfax County School Board argued for modification of the state's minimum competency program which set standards for graduation. They believed that the program came too late in school to remediate and was inefficient in that teachers could have easily identified low achievers without a battery of costly tests. Davis and the Fairfax board also criticized what it felt was an increasing cumbersome amount of paperwork caused by state regulations. His most prominent battle against the federal bureaucracy came in his successful efforts for Fairfax's English as a Second Language Program.

⁵Franklin, 15.

⁶S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

Japanese Education First Hand

Recognition of Davis as an instructional leader of a leading school system came in his selection by the Japanese government for a twenty-one day trip to Japan to observe and report on the educational system there. His trip was paid for by a grant from the Japan Foundation, and at the end of his visit Davis spoke before the staff of the Japanese Ministry of Education. Davis told Japanese officials their strongest program was the vocational system which surpassed Fairfax County's technical facilities. He also praised their research and their work with the handicapped. However, Davis told officials he was concerned about the high pupil-teacher ratio in the system with 45 to 1 in Japan as opposed to 27 to 1 in Fairfax County. Davis also shared information about the county's new solar school at Reston and described the College Board examination to his audience.⁹⁷

An Instructional Superintendent

As an instructional leader, Jack Davis tended to be pragmatic. While Larry Watts, Davis' predecessor as superintendent had excellent instructional ideas, he did not

⁹⁷Cynthia Carney, "School Head Compares County, Japanese Schools, "The Fairfax (Virginia) Gazette, 13 July 1977, 1.

have Davis' mastery of public relations. Davis was successful because he knew the system well and was an energetic salesperson for his ideas and programs." He was able to implement new programs. He was not an intellectual like Watts; in fact, one former colleague (who shall remain anonymous) believed that Davis' weakness was that he did not have a deep intellectual basis. According to this individual, his trip to Japan was characterized on his return by his expressed amazement with certain customs and practices that showed he knew little about the country and its people.

Jack Davis saw himself as an instructional superintendent. At one stage in his Fairfax superintendency, his wife Jan convinced him that the antidote to budget battles, bond referenda, and attendance boundary disputes was to immerse himself in the instructional program. With the able, experienced assistants that he trusted ensconced in finance, planning, administration, and building, Davis was able to spend time in the schools and develop educational programs for students."

"Johnson, telephone conversation, 20 February 1993.

"S. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

Accountability

The 1960s and 1970s were both decades in which accountability played a major role in education in the United States and in Fairfax County, Virginia. When one reviews the principles of accountability and the accountability movement itself in relationship to the career of S. John Davis, it is obvious that accountability played a major role in his work as an educational leader.

Davis, himself, as he left Fairfax County to assume the state superintendency, attributed his success in Fairfax County to "accountability in the system." As he told a reporter just after Governor Dalton's announcement of his appointment, "Now with accountability, standardized testing material is built into the curriculum. There is no need for cramming."¹⁰⁰ Or, as a Roanoke reporter wrote about the new state superintendent, "He believes in fiscal and instructional accountability."¹⁰¹

In Fairfax County Davis' adherence to accountability was seen early in his superintendency. As has been discussed earlier in this analysis, Davis' doctoral

¹⁰⁰Nancy Zeldis, "Davis' Legacy: An Almost Perfect Record," Northern Virginia Sun, 30 May 1979, 1.

¹⁰¹Jack Chamberlain, "Education: New Schools' Chief Favors Leadership, Not Control," Roanoke Times and World News, 10 June 1979, sec. B, 1.

dissertation and his first major initiative as superintendent were in the area of fiscal accountability as he developed and implemented a programmed budgeting system for Fairfax County. That planning, programming, budgeting system became the chief component in Davis' "Commitment to Education," which became the overall planning document for the system. Davis next developed the Program of Studies, which provided grade-level objectives, criterion referenced tests, suggested teaching strategies, and specifications for instructional materials, equipment, and facilities for the basic subjects taught in the Fairfax County Public Schools. Standardized tests were also administered throughout the system.

However, the system of accountability was not yet complete for Fairfax County. Performance contracting, program budgeting, management by objectives, and state-wide and local assessments are all based on assumptions of program evaluation. The evaluation in use county-wide in the early 1970s included state accreditation, regional accreditation, state achievement and ability tests, locally developed criterion-referenced tests, opinion surveys, and accountability for annual improvement plans developed along with each school's budget. The only comprehensive system of evaluation in use was the Evaluative Criteria of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Secondary

schools were evaluated every ten years with this process, but elementary schools in Fairfax County did not use the regional evaluative criteria after 1975. Experience had shown Dr. Davis and his staff that self-study and review by a visiting committee of outsiders usually resulted in "somewhat self-serving and superficial evaluations, with little effective follow up." They also believed that this process gave insufficient emphasis on county objectives, and there was no way that results could be aggregated easily for use on a countywide level.¹⁰²

In response to federal and state mandates, court decisions, and local problems, the superintendent and school board had issued directives which had the effect of reducing the autonomy of school staff members. There was evidence of uneven compliance with such policies. Closer monitoring through area offices was difficult because of traditional relationships between the schools and the area offices and because of the large span of control. Another problem for the Fairfax County Public Schools was a lack of information which could be used systematically for program evaluation at the school level. This problem was addressed by the establishment of a management information system to store

¹⁰²Mary Anne Lecos, Process Evaluation in Fairfax County Schools, 5.

test data and other information about schools and students.¹⁰³

The Program Audit

In 1976 in order to address the situation described above, Division Superintendent S. John Davis received school board approval for "the development of a program audit system to strengthen the evaluation component of the management-by-objectives system which had been introduced earlier."¹⁰⁴ Davis envisioned such a system as a way of insuring more consistent compliance with policy, evaluating the effectiveness of policies and procedures, and utilizing area and central office resources more efficiently in program improvement.¹⁰⁵

The Program Audit model that was approved had three components: (1) surveys of staff, students, and parents, (2) a review of instruction and school environment by a visiting team of Fairfax County professionals, and (3) a review of other aspects of administration by the area

¹⁰³Ibid., 6.

¹⁰⁴Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meeting, 1975-76," 14 May 1976.

¹⁰⁵Lecos, Process Evaluation in Fairfax County Schools, 7.

superintendent. The model was field tested during the spring of 1978, and Program Audits of Instruction were conducted in twenty-five schools during the 1978-79 school year. Reports were provided to the principals of these schools and to area superintendents. Follow-up plans for addressing problems were developed at the school level. Cumulative reports were made to the school board identifying strengths and weaknesses commonly found and suggested changes in policy needed to address identified problems.¹⁰⁶

The Audits of Administration and Instruction

The development of the Audit of Administration was led by the division superintendent, the associate superintendent, and area superintendents. Lists of standards related to general administration, staff, and student personnel management, communications, and community relations were culled from school division policies and presented to the group. A workshop was held in which the list was modified by adding, deleting, and revising the wording of the standards. Draft copies were reviewed with representatives of the principals and returned to the area superintendents for final revision before field testing.

The Audit of Instruction was formulated in a series of

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 8.

three workshops in which twenty-five area coordinators of instruction, selected curriculum specialists, and representative resource teachers participated. Standards were developed and rated in four categories: school management of instruction, classroom management of instruction, classroom climate, and school environment. Guidelines for assessment were also included as were guidelines for staffing, organizing, and scheduling the actual audits.¹⁰⁷

Following the second workshop, administrative and instructional instruments were reviewed with representatives of the elementary, intermediate, and high school principals' associations. Principals recommended that teachers not be given copies of individual rating sheets because of possible conflict with the existing personnel evaluation procedures. Other concerns were more general and included: (1) validity and reliability of the process, (2) impact and burden on the schools, (3) infringement of principals' autonomy, and (4) skepticism about the benefit to the schools. It was decided that these issues could best be settled through field testing.

Principals were most worried about the use and distribution of Program Audit findings. They were fearful that results might be leaked to the press or to community

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 95-97.

groups that would misinterpret and misuse findings. They were also suspicious that the closer monitoring by the area offices was a new form of personnel evaluation for administrators if not for teachers. To allay these concerns, Dr. Davis gave two assurances:

...program audit findings would not be released for individual schools and...there was no connection between the Program Audit and personnel evaluation for teachers. He did acknowledge a connection with performance evaluation of principals, but promised that findings would be used along with other indicators to establish objectives cooperatively for future evaluation and to provide assistance for improvement.¹⁰⁸

A trait of the educational establishment has historically been to stonewall the revelation of weaknesses to the public. Dr. Davis seemingly missed a golden opportunity to advance the course of accountability when he allowed the principals' paranoia over the use and distribution of program audit results to limit the publication of information.

The Program Audit was field tested in March, April, and early May of 1978. After analysis of the results of field testing and further revision, twenty-five schools were scheduled for audits during the 1978-79 school year. Follow-up changes were minor ones designed to reduce the

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 98-99.

administrative burden, to increase the standardization of procedures, and to minimize the anxieties which accompany any evaluation.

Conducting a Program Audit

The order of the Program Audit was established: first, audit surveys; second, audit of instruction; and third, audit of administration. The audit survey included six survey instruments: elementary and secondary versions of parent, staff, and student surveys which covered categories that included educational goals, instructional programs, support for instruction, curriculum, guidance, student activities, communications, student behavior, and school climate. Surveys, at elementary schools, went to all members of the professional staff, to all fifth and sixth graders, and to all parents. At the secondary level, surveys went to all staff members and to all eighth and eleventh graders and their parents. Surveys were administered at a school several weeks before the outside visit.

The Audit of Administration was conducted by each area superintendent with assistance of a small team of area staff members with appropriate expertise. Using a five-point scale, area superintendents rated compliance with twenty-eight to thirty-one criteria related to general adminis-

tration, personnel management, communication, and student activities. Some data were retrieved from existing records and some were secured from observation and direct contact with students, school staff, and members of the community.

The Audit of Instruction was conducted by audit teams composed of central and area office specialists, school administrators, and teachers. Team members were selected from nominees submitted by program managers, including principals and other administrators. Half of the members were from outside the administrative area in which the school was located. In elementary schools one team of generalists and specialists reviewed the entire program; in secondary schools a separate team was organized for each department. Team orientation provided notebooks containing descriptive material about the Program Audit and instructions, audit instruments for practice, and information about the school. Time spent in each school varied from two to four days. There was observation of instruction by each teacher and in all parts of the curriculum. Conferences were held with each teacher and administrator. Each teacher shared brief lesson plans with objectives and planned activities for the lesson.

Worksheets were used for structuring notes and recording ratings on each standard on a five-point scale. Ratings were compiled and mean ratings were computed for

each standard. Basic program strengths and recommendations for dealing with perceived weaknesses were compiled. A draft report was discussed first with the principal and then the faculty. The report was made final and submitted to the principal and area superintendent. Principals responded to the report with a follow-up plan. Principals had the authority to share results in summary form with appropriate groups. A summary report was given to the school board at the end of the year. Actions required by the school board and central office staff to solve problems at the school level were enumerated in response to Program Audit findings.¹⁰⁹

The Accountability Model

With the Program Audit added to the Planning Programming Budgeting System and to the Program of Studies, Dr. Davis and the school board had built a comprehensive accountability system for Fairfax County Public Schools. The budgeting model tied dollars directly to educational programs and gave a strict cost accounting of school and program efficiency. The Program of Studies model increased the degree of accountability by spelling out measurable objectives with evaluative criteria and strategies for

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 107-121.

implementation. Finally, the Program Audit gave Fairfax County a detailed systems analysis approach to make schools more accountable.

Fairfax County's schools under S. John Davis' leadership used a variety of approaches to assess accountability. Concepts of accountability that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s can be readily discerned. Systems-based technology leading to PPBS, educational program auditing providing a critical evaluation of specified portions of school programs, defined levels of performance expectations, and a quickening of institutional responsiveness through increased local participation including parent involvement were all a part of the system Dr. Davis and his staff promulgated during the 1970s.

Also readily discernible in Davis' accountability model for Fairfax County were elements of what Raymond E. Callahan termed the "cult of efficiency" in American education. Business and industry values and practices were used throughout the model. Davis' budgeting plan and his use of educational cost accounting both applied cost analysis and accounting to the schools in a manner similar to Callahan's depiction of "instruction following accounting."¹¹⁰ The

¹¹⁰Raymond E. Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), 148-153.

Program of Studies model in Fairfax County with its emphasis on management by objectives and Franklin Bobbitt's principles calling for "definite qualitative and quantitative standards to determine the product" were strikingly similar.¹¹¹ The Program Audit in the Fairfax plan and the "instruction follows accounting" approach by the efficiency administrators both sought to demonstrate efficiency through records and reports.¹¹²

Although Davis emphasized business and industrial values and approached education in a businesslike, mechanical, organizational way, he did not commit what Callahan considered the ultimate sin by placing his emphasis on "the lowest cost" instead of on "producing the finest product." Impossible class loads were not placed on teachers, although they did complain of the many ideas and changes that were being foisted upon them. However, Callahan's concern for "binding education in red tape"¹¹³ was translated by Davis into the "burdens of paperwork" as evidenced by each of the three aspects of his accountability model. While Davis' work in Fairfax County showed significant evidence of the influence of the "cult of

¹¹¹Ibid, 79.

¹¹²Ibid, 153.

¹¹³Ibid, 170-178.

efficiency," it did consider efficiency and economy in the light of the quality of education that was being provided.

Test Results

Dr. Davis stated that the easiest way to view accountability and to measure his success would be to look at the test scores generated by Fairfax County students during his tenure.¹¹⁴ An analysis of data in Table 3 shows that Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) results in Fairfax County were consistently higher than both national and state averages. SAT verbal results show that Fairfax County graduating seniors scored from twenty-two to thirty-four points higher than the nation and mathematics results ranged from twenty-six to thirty-seven points higher. During the same period Virginia seniors as a whole scored from one to three points lower than the nation on SAT verbal and from six to ten points lower on mathematics. While it appears at first glance that Fairfax SAT scores declined after 1973-74, the decline is explained because of the substantial increase in the number of seniors taking the SAT. From 1974-75 through 1979-80 over seventy percent of Fairfax County's graduating seniors took the SAT.

¹¹⁴G. John Davis, interview, 3 June 1992.

Table 3**Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores, 1972 - 1980**

Year	VERBAL		
	National	Virginia	Fairfax
1972-73	445	441	474
1973-74	444	440	478
1974-75	434	431	464
1975-76	431	428	463
1976-77	429	426	462
1977-78	429	428	463
1978-79	427	426	460
1979-80	424	423	456

Year	MATHEMATICS		
	National	Virginia	Fairfax
1972-73	481	471	510
1973-74	480	470	510
1974-75	472	463	498
1975-76	472	462	503
1976-77	470	461	506
1977-78	468	462	506
1978-79	467	461	502
1979-80	466	460	503

Note: From data filed in the Fairfax County School Board Office.

An analysis of data from Table 4, which gives results from the Science Research Associates (SRA) Achievement Test at grades 4, 8, and 11, reveals that Fairfax County students achieved at levels higher than their own ability in fifty-seven areas, the same as ability in twelve areas, and lower than ability in eighty-one areas during Dr. Davis' superintendency. From the first year Dr. Davis took office until the year he left Fairfax County, students at grades 4, 8, and 11 scored significantly above the national mean, made gains in nine of the fifteen achievement test areas, and declined slightly or remained the same in the other six areas.

A comparison of test data in Table 4, which gives mean percentile achievement scores of Fairfax County students and Table 5, which gives the same achievement test scores for Virginia students, indicates that Fairfax County students consistently scored at levels higher than their statewide peers. It is possible to conclude, as Dr. Davis did, that testing results show the effectiveness of instructional programs implemented in the Fairfax County Public Schools under his leadership. However, it is also important to note that Fairfax County was located in one of the most affluent areas of the United States. Since socio-economic status accounts for as much as twenty-five percent of the variance in standardized test scores, the wealth and high educational

Table 4

Percentile Ranks for Mean Ability and Achievement Scores for Students in Fairfax County, 1970-1980

Year	Ability	Reading	Lang. Arts	Math	Social Studies	Science
Grade 4						
1970-71	58	61	59	58	62	62
1971-72	56	60	58	57	62	63
1972-73	58	64	62	59	65	62
1973-74	52	63	54	55	58	56
1974-75	61	69	61	57	66	63
1975-76	65	73	62	59	69	67
1976-77	70	73	66	64	72	67
1977-78	73	73	70	67	72	67
1978-79	76	74	71	73	75	70
1979-80	76	77	71	73	72	70
Grade 8						
1970-71	62	63	62	60	62	61
1971-72	62	62	62	63	61	62
1972-73	64	64	61	62	60	63
1973-74	64	64	52	60	61	58
1974-75	68	68	62	64	63	60
1975-76	65	65	58	64	63	57
1976-77	64	65	62	66	63	57
1977-78	64	65	62	68	63	60
1978-79	68	65	64	70	63	60
1979-80	68	66	66	70	63	60
Grade 11						
1970-71	64	65	52	60	61	65
1971-72	64	66	52	65	61	62
1972-73	65	66	52	61	66	64
1973-74	65	66	51	61	64	62
1974-75	64	66	53	66	65	58
1975-76	61	66	53	66	59	58
1976-77	61	66	53	66	59	55
1977-78	64	62	61	66	59	55
1978-79	64	62	61	66	59	55
1979-80	61	62	61	66	59	55

Note: From data filed in the Fairfax County School Board Office. The Science Research Associates Test was used during this timeframe.

Table 5

Percentile Ranks for Mean Ability and Achievement Scores for Students in the State Testing Program, 1971-1980

Year	Ability	Reading	Lang. Arts	Math	Social Studies	Science
Grade 4						
1971-72	-	46	48	46	49	49
1972-73	-	46	48	46	45	47
1973-74	35	46		35		
1974-75	44	51	47	45	49	51
1975-76	44	51	49	45	49	51
1976-77	49	53	52	45	53	51
1977-78	49	55	54	51	56	56
1978-79	53	57	56	54	56	56
1979-80	58	61	59	57	60	59
Grade 8						
1971-72	39	41	37	36	41	44
1972-73	37	43	37	38	36	39
1973-74	37	40	40	41	40	40
1974-75	41	42	41	41	39	42
1975-76	39	42	41	41	39	42
1976-77	41	42	41	43	39	42
1977-78	38	42	43	45	39	42
1978-79	41	42	43	49	39	42
1979-80	41	43	45	49	39	42
Grade 11						
1971-72	47	46	-	42	47	41
1972-73	41	45	45	50	43	45
1973-74	41	42	40	47	43	42
1974-75	42	47	38	50	45	36
1975-76	42	47	38	50	41	36
1976-77	42	47	38	50	41	36
1977-78 a	-	-	-	-	-	-
1978-79	42	47	38	50	41	36
1979-80	42	47	38	50	41	36

a Tests were not administered in grade 11 in 1977-78.

Note: From data filed in the Assessment and Testing Office, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia. The Science Research Associates Test was used during this timeframe.

levels of the citizens played a role in students' test scores being as high as they were.¹¹⁵

Reasons for Accountability Emphasis

There were a number of reasons as to why Dr. Davis embraced the accountability movement. The first was influence from within the school system that included the PPBS Committee of the Fairfax County Public Schools. The second was Davis' own graduate program at American University which became linked to his responsibilities for the implementation of programmed budgeting in the school system. Third, Fairfax County's proximity to Washington, DC, and the federal government's advocacy of accountability influenced Dr. Davis and his staff. The citizens of Fairfax County, many of whom worked for the government, gave input on accountability measures through advisory committees and public hearings. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, Fairfax County Public Schools' position as one of the leading school systems in the country caused its leadership to strive to be on the cutting edge of educational practice. In the period that Dr. Davis held a leadership position in Fairfax County, the accountability movement was at the forefront of innovative educational practices. Systems

¹¹⁵James S. Coleman, Equality and Achievement in Education (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1990), 123.

analysis, PPBS, MBO, evaluation, and other rudiments of accountability were natural for an administrator like Dr. Davis to embrace.

Management

S. John Davis was a successful division superintendent in Fairfax County for nine years. His reputation as an educational leader and manager was such that he was thought by many to be a logical choice for the appointment as Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia. In both 1975 and 1979 he was considered for such an appointment by two different governors. Management philosophy, style, and day-to-day practice as well as an individual's personality influence an educational manager's work, the results he achieves, and the way others view him. Dr. Davis' management approach and the type of person that he was shaped his educational record and the perception that others developed of him.

The following analysis of Dr. Davis' as a manager in an educational setting is drawn from his years as Fairfax County's division chief. Further analysis will determine whether his philosophy and practice remained consistent at the state level or if it changed as the nature and circumstances of his leadership responsibilities changed.

Personal Factors

Jack Davis grew up in a small town in the coal mining section of Pennsylvania, moved to a large metropolis where he lived in the suburbs, and worked his way up the administrative ladder in one of the largest school systems in the country. Davis' personality played a role in his success. In Fairfax County, Davis was almost universally liked and respected. He was described as "competent, professional, sincere, fair, likeable, personable, sensitive, level-headed, rational and decent."¹¹⁶ A few months before the description above was penned, an article about Davis in the Washington Post was entitled, "How Does A Good Guy Do So Well?" The author wrote, "To hear people talk, you'd think Fairfax County Superintendent, S. John Davis, hasn't an enemy in the world."¹¹⁷ William Wrench, one of Jack Davis' school board chairmen in Fairfax County, said, "He's one of the most decent human beings I've ever

¹¹⁶Peter P. Kinnahan, "Ideas into Action: A Comparative Study of the Philosophy and Performance of Ms. Barbara A. Sizemore, Superintendent, District of Columbia Public Schools, and Dr. S. John Davis, Division Superintendent, Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools" (Public Administration Department, George Washington University, 1975), 3. (An unpublished paper prepared for a graduate course entitled Behavior Factors in Large Organizations, PAD 223; in the Files of the Public Relations Office, Fairfax County School Board.)

¹¹⁷Rosenfeld, "How Does A Good Guy Do So Well?" B-1.

known."¹¹⁸ While the Fairfax school system was not without its critics, Davis himself was almost universally well-liked and respected by the school board, county officials, and the public.¹¹⁹

Jack Davis was an open, accessible person. Relations with his top staff were friendly, candid, respectful, and professional. It was "Davis' penchant for involving others in the decision-making process that became the hallmark of his administration."¹²⁰ Board members, union representatives, bus drivers, coaches, parents, and students echoed these sentiments. Davis made it a habit to know personally teachers, administrators, county officials, and community representatives, and he actively fostered these relationships. Davis believed that a manager was weak if he could not or did not communicate with all individuals being served by or serving his school system. Shortly after his appointment as superintendent, when morale was low from his immediate predecessor's rapid changes in staff, Davis substantially reorganized the entire top structure of the Fairfax County School System. However, this move was more

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Kinnahan, 34.

sensitive to the interests of all affected. He asked staff members for recommendations on the reorganization and appointments of new staff personnel.¹²¹ The acrimony that arose from the changes of the Watts' era melted into harmony and stability during Jack Davis' tenure.

Conversely, one anonymous Fairfax educator remembered internal dissension as Dr. Davis had two or three confidants who served as "hatchet men" for him. Dr. Davis also could ignore a staff person if he were no longer interested in that person's idea or decided that nothing more of value was to be gained.

Management Theory

Jack Davis' graduate program at both George Washington and American University contained the classic management philosophy promulgated by Max Weber and Frederick Taylor, and his work as superintendent in Fairfax County demonstrated this training. Davis' philosophy, like Weber's and Taylor's, stressed the need to find the best way to work and placed responsibility for this task on management. The general flow of ideas in this scheme was top-down with change and direction coming from management. However,

¹²¹Ibid.; Morris, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993; and Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

Davis' scientific management philosophy was additionally influenced by two later-day schools of thought.

First, Davis' doctoral dissertation Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems: A New Horizon in Public School Financial Management exhibited his fascination and faith in management as it developed in the 1960s and 1970s. Davis' management philosophy was dominated in this arena by management by objectives and a systems analysis approach. To ensure success, efficiency, and accountability in educational programs and fiscal management, Davis introduced a planning, programming budgeting system and a management by objectives system. "Commitment to Education," a five-year plan for Fairfax County, was prepared at Dr. Davis' direction with professional and community input. His program managers (principals) participated in defining annual objectives and budgets. Following school board approval, responsibility for meeting both objectives and budget was, under Davis' plan, placed heavily on the manager. Failure to accomplish what one said would be done was serious for it pointed to a weakness in executing the plan. Another significant offense was failure to cooperate with or follow the agreed-upon decisions of the management team because this pointed to a more fundamental lack of integrity. In practice Davis transferred or dismissed

quietly personnel (managers) who failed.¹²²

The second corollary of Davis' management philosophy came from the influence of management theorists who were important during the 1950s and 1960. In 1975 Davis had in his office bookcase two classic management texts: Chester Barnard's The Functions of the Executive (1962) and Warren Bennis' Changing Organizations (1966). Both authors focused heavily on participative decision making and humanizing large impersonal bureaucracies. Davis told an interviewer that he personally followed Barnard and Bennis and used their principles in the running of the Fairfax County Public Schools.¹²³ Bennis' five principles for effective management were particularly revealing: free communication, consensus, influence through competence, emotionally expressive atmosphere, and inevitable conflict resolved by rationality.¹²⁴

Another major figure who complemented Barnard's and Bennis' concepts and shaped Davis' philosophy was Douglas McGregor, the progenitor of Theory X and Theory Y. Davis

¹²²Kinnahan, 25.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Warren Bennis, Changing Organizations (McGraw Hill, Inc.: New York, 1966), 1-2.

believed that he practiced Theory Y management. His managers, employees, and clients were expected to be self-directed within the framework of managerial goals, which were developed in a participative manner.¹²⁵

Senior staff members describe Davis' management practice in Fairfax County as "using dialogue, building consensus, consulting, delegating, and holding accountable."¹²⁶ School board members agree that Davis had the ability to forge compromises, paid attention to what was said by others, and had the capacity to develop a great deal of loyalty from his staff.¹²⁷

Communications

Davis was committed to the principle of community involvement in the school system. Administrative decentralization in Fairfax County Public Schools took place in the late 1960's when Davis himself became an area superintendent. To further implement decentralization, Davis later encouraged parents, community officials, and

¹²⁵Kinnahan, 22.

¹²⁶Cale, interview, 26 April 1993; Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993; and Morris, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993.

¹²⁷Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

school board members to contact area administrators and principals directly. Davis required his staff to go to the person responsible before going elsewhere. His newsletters to parents and community urged them to follow the "chain of command"--local school to area offices to central office. In structuring local and regional advisory bodies, each group had leeway in picking objectives from the county plan that it felt most appropriate for the local situation.¹²⁸

In Davis' programmed budgeting system each local school was a program. Schools were funded on a per-pupil formula, and as principals required additional resources or personnel, they had to document need to the area superintendent. In turn, the area superintendent had to justify requests to Dr. Davis and the central office budget staff. Each school and the community it served was treated individually. Hiring was at the school level; the use of funds was determined at the school level.¹²⁹

To keep his communication links open throughout the school system, Davis had no executive or administrative assistants. He preferred to work directly with and through his key line and staff people, who constituted his

¹²⁸Kinnahan, 23.

¹²⁹Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

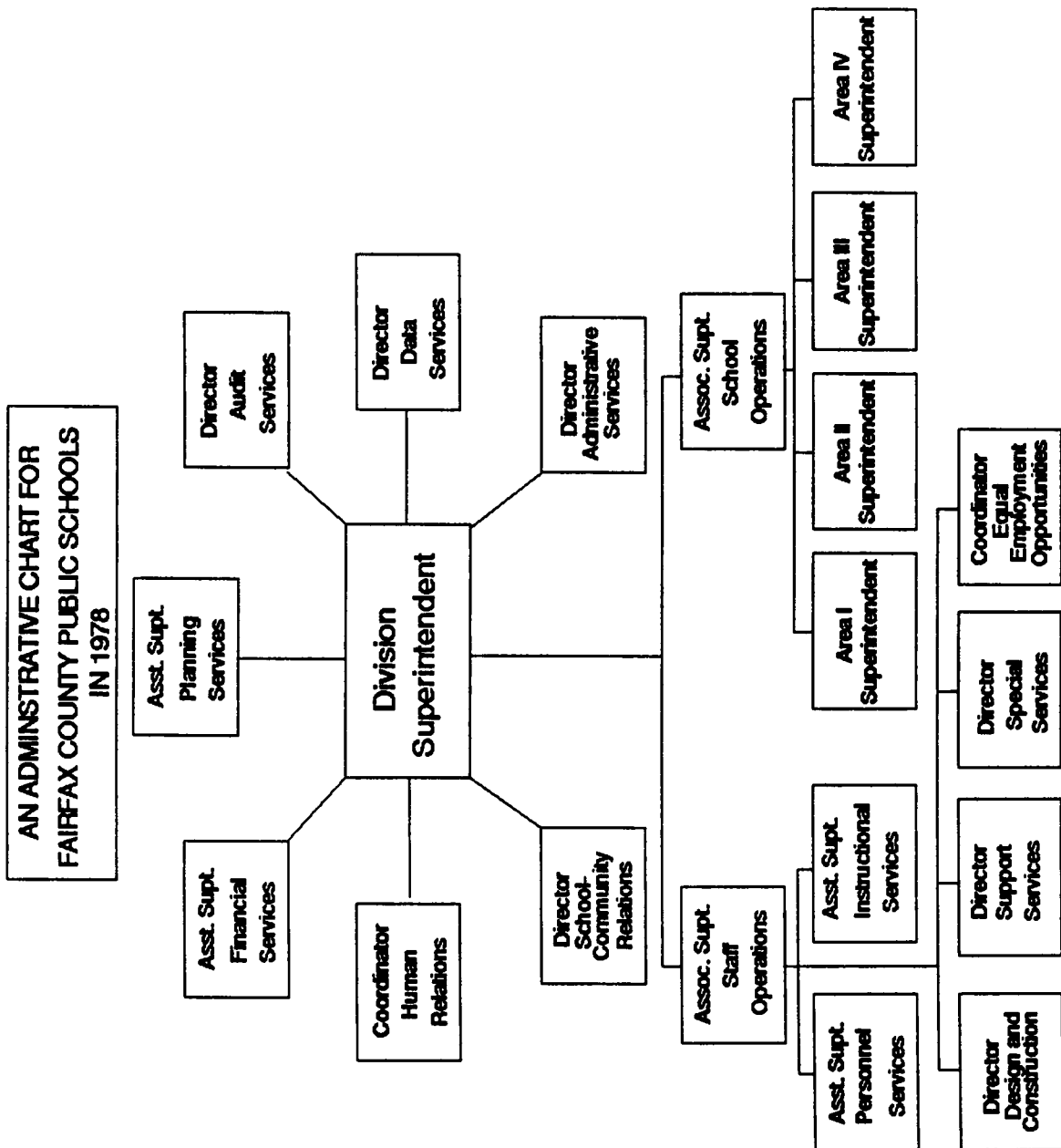
management team and met weekly to discuss matters to be taken to the school board. Figure 1 illustrates Davis' administrative organization in the Fairfax County Public Schools.

Dr. Davis actively sought participation in his relations with his team, but Davis did not diffuse his power or authority. After the staff discussed an issue, Davis made the final decision.¹³⁰ This conclusion was shared by the graduate students who observed a staff meeting in 1975 and wrote, "During the staff meeting which I observed, while there was 'open' discussion, Davis clearly ran the meeting and made the final decisions."¹³¹ This evidence contradicts senior staff members' description of Davis as a consensus builder. Apparently, he did solicit ideas and opinions from others, but he remained the ultimate administrative authority.

Davis had a large advisory group--the Superintendent's Planning Council. It had approximately thirty-five representatives from major professional and community groups whose interests were linked with the Fairfax County Public Schools. School administrators, principals, teachers, union

¹³⁰Johnson, telephone conversation, 20 February 1993.

¹³¹Kinnahan, 23-24.



Note: From files in the Fairfax County School Board Office, Public Relations Department.

Figure 1

officials, bus drivers, PTA, churches, coaches, Chamber of Commerce, Citizen Taxpayer's Association, League of Women Voters, food service personnel, students, special education parents were all represented on the Council. Davis met with council delegates monthly. In addition, he met with sub-groups (e.g., elementary school principals, secretaries, coaches, bus drivers) on a regular basis and encouraged his area superintendents to do the same. Davis also tried to be out in the schools and community as much as possible, and he usually scheduled each Friday as school-visitation day.¹³² Davis told a Washington Post reporter in a 1975 interview, "I find myself uncomfortable when I feel isolated from the schools."¹³³

Davis also managed the Fairfax County School Board. Board meetings, held twice monthly, were generally models of decorum. Davis' relations with the school board were characterized by the same search for the opinion of others that he used in directing the staff. Board members agreed that they were well-informed, that there was no attempt to hide anything from them, and that they were free to question

¹³²Ibid. and Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

¹³³Rosenfeld, "How Does A Good Guy Do So Well?" B-1.

and ask for information.¹³⁴ Davis' board chairpersons agreed that Davis' working relationship with the board was excellent and that he listened carefully to board members and kept them well informed.¹³⁵

Focus on Implementation

Management style has been defined as a term that can best be determined by the results of a manager's behavior and not by what was intended. That is, managerial style is determined not by what one theorizes but by what one does. Jack Davis' superintendency in Fairfax County was marked by his pragmatic approach. As a close friend and staff member has observed, "Jack is a super salesman for his programs and is successful, for he is most of all pragmatic."¹³⁶

The graduate student who observed Superintendent Davis at work in 1975 described awkwardly but tellingly what he saw:

His primary concern during the staff meeting was the answer to the question, "Can we do it? Can we

¹³⁴Kinnahan, 24 and Rosenfeld, "How Does A Good Guy Do So Well?"

¹³⁵Perlik, telephone conversation, 21 February 1993; Goldsmith, telephone conversation, 4 February 1993; and Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

¹³⁶Johnson, telephone conversation, 20 February 1993.

implement it?" He was very sensitive to the board's reaction to any administration action or proposals. Anticipated opposition to any programs from special interest groups tabled implementation until he, or someone from the team, could get with the particular group or its leadership to explain the proposal to them and to solicit their support.¹³⁷

Davis' sensitivity to the real world problems of getting ideas and programs implemented, not merely stated or imposed, resulted in a major communications effort by the Fairfax County Public Schools. Davis created a centralized and professionally administered public relations office, which issued ten publications on a regular basis to various audiences such as the board, teachers, parents, principals, students, key staff, and the press. Davis himself met with public groups, often three or four nights a week, and his director of school-community relations and the area superintendents were also often out before the community. Important issues such as annual budgets were marketed to the public by Dr. Davis and his staff through numerous publications and public meetings and hearings.¹³⁸

Dr. Davis was quick to praise his school board and his staff. He believed that if they did well, they made him look good. He was especially proud of several of his top

¹³⁷Kinnahan, 28.

¹³⁸Cale, interview, 26 April 1993.

staff who were well-known advisors in their specialties. He felt that the great majority of all Fairfax County Public School personnel were competent and concerned.

Dr. Davis hired all members of his management team himself and groomed replacements for all top staff, not only for the sake of organizational continuity and protection but also to encourage personal incentive and competition. Davis personally interviewed principal, central office, and area superintendent applicants. However, he also talked to others about the top applicants.

If a principal were to be hired, for example, he would talk to people in the schools in all areas--custodians, secretaries, teachers, parents--and ask them about the needs of the school and the type of person they felt the school needed before making a decision.¹³⁹ This collaborative hiring practice was illustrative of his ability to listen to various points of view, to initiate alternative ideas, and to obtain concerns. Yet his organizational structure was hierarchical in nature; he insisted on a chain-of-command approach, and final authority was centered in the superintendent.

¹³⁹G. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

Humanizing the System

Another salient point in Jack Davis' management of the Fairfax County Public Schools was his emphasis on humanizing the school system. The 1970s in American education were partially defined by a series of reform reports that focused on the lack of relevance and humaneness in the nation's schools. The imperatives for humanizing education were highlighted, and various strategies to prevent schools from dehumanizing students were frequently emphasized.

In interview after interview during his tenure as Fairfax County's superintendent, Davis listed as his major challenge "humanizing the system." In an interview given in 1975 Davis conceptualized "humanizing" by stating:

I don't mean permissiveness.... I mean people respecting each other. Somehow, I'd like to bring about an atmosphere of closeness and understanding. I came from a small town, with a graduating class of 200, so that may be why I feel more comfortable in that kind of atmosphere.¹⁴⁰

Davis expanded his definition to include:

I feel very strongly that a school system as large as ours runs the risk of becoming cold and impersonal, and that we should make every effort to humanize and personalize the organization that serves 136,000 girls and boys.... In the area of publications, Supergram, Familygram, and our many brochures have helped in this regard. Meeting informally and on a regular basis with our many employee, student, and

¹⁴⁰Rosenfeld, "How Does a Good Guy Do So Well?" B-1.

community advisory groups has, I feel, also helped in this personalization. However, the real key to this must be at the local school level between teacher and student."¹⁴¹

The Standards of Quality (SOQ) enacted by the 1974 General Assembly of Virginia echoed Davis' belief that humanizing education was a classroom function. Requiring the humanizing of instruction for the first time in the 1974-76 biennium, the standards required teachers to do the following:

know the academic strengths and weaknesses of each child; know the home and community environment of each child; treat each child as an individual in accordance with his needs; understand and appreciate each child as an individual of worth; and help each child to recognize his potential, to develop his ability, and to assume his responsibilities as a member of the group.¹⁴²

S. John Davis was one of the most vocal of Virginia's local superintendents who advocated the humanizing of instruction. His speeches and writings during the mid-1970s were filled with ideas on the value of humanization and personalization in schools. He discussed notions on humanizing instruction with the state superintendent on

¹⁴¹S. John Davis, "Humanizing the System Pays Dividends," "Fairfax Schools Bulletin, 11 (June 1975), 1.

¹⁴²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Standards of Quality and Objectives for Public Schools in Virginia 1974-76," 1 July 1974, 6.

several occasions.¹⁴³ Although Dr. Davis did not participate directly in the writing of the new standard requiring teachers to humanize instruction, his endorsement of the concept and his desire to personalize the state's largest school division, helped raise the climate of support that led to its adoption.¹⁴⁴

Davis' statement that "the real key to this [humanizing] must be at the local school level between teacher and student" reflects closely the planning and managing objective for teachers which the state board adopted. Fairfax County teachers had little difficulty implementing this objective mandating humanizing classroom instruction, because Dr. Davis had already incorporated similar imperatives into the school system's philosophy of operation.¹⁴⁵

Early in his superintendency Dr. Davis created a Council for Educational and Human Understanding, which had as its purpose and philosophy "the premise that all people are special." The council was designed to respond to requests from principals for assistance by sending two council members to work with that particular school.

¹⁴³G. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

¹⁴⁴William H. Cochran, interview by author, Richmond, Virginia, 7 January 1994.

¹⁴⁵Lecos, telephone conversation, 24 May 1993.

Council members and a school involvement committee appointed by the principal defined problems and developed plans for solving these problems.¹⁴⁶ Davis hoped that better human relations would be fostered by this imperative.

Bias and Race Relations

In an allied area Dr. Davis had major concerns about bias in the Fairfax County Public School System. Davis moved aggressively in the area of gender bias and discrimination and expressed a strong desire to eliminate such bias and discrimination a year before Title IX was passed by the federal government to prohibit sexual discrimination.¹⁴⁷

Another major managerial challenge in humanizing the huge Fairfax County school system was in the area of race relations. During the 1970s some serious racial problems developed in Falls Church and Herndon high schools. The Herndon High School situation was especially troublesome because teachers were guilty of telling ethnic jokes, which created a poor climate and encouraged some students to

¹⁴⁶G. John Davis, "New Council on Educational, Human Understanding Is Ready to Help," Fairfax Schools Bulletin, 7 (May 1971), 1.

¹⁴⁷G. John Davis, "Education Can Be Better When Unfettered by Bias," Fairfax Schools Bulletin, 12 (September 1975), 1.

follow suit. Student cliques--blacks and "red-neck" whites--staked out various areas of the school as their own exclusive territory from which non-members of the clique were barred. In response Davis sent an investigative team into the school and then endorsed its strongly worded report which recommended a liberal teacher-transfer plan for those who failed to adjust and continued to behave in a racist or destructive manner either overtly or covertly.¹⁴⁸

Davis' Human Relations Advisory Committee also proposed that a coordinator of human relations be hired. Dr. Albert Tippit, a black administrator from Charlottesville, was recruited for the job, and Connie Johnson, a Fairfax Teacher, became Tippit's deputy and later the coordinator after Tippit was promoted. The coordinator of human relations reported directly to the superintendent. All professionals were required to take a three semester hour course in human relations; and the staff development emphasis, along with strong punitive action when violations occurred, showed Davis' determination to improve race relations.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸Staff, "Herndon High School Warned to Curb Racism," Washington Star, (n.d.)1975, 1. (From undated copy in files, Fairfax County School Board Public Relations Office.)

¹⁴⁹Johnson, telephone conversation, 20 February 1993.

Jack Davis was also cognizant of race and gender in staff appointments. When he became superintendent for Area II, he named a woman assistant. He appointed a number of women to high school principalships, and he also appointed the first woman athletic director at a high school in the county. Davis appointed blacks as principals, as administrators in the area and central offices, and as area superintendents.¹⁵⁰ However, as might be expected with Fairfax County's minority population at six percent in the 1970s, Jack Davis' management team was predominantly white. A review of Fairfax Schools Bulletin and other personnel information shows that in the sixteen top staff positions (assistant, associate, and area superintendents and directors) from 1974 to 1979, Davis did not have more than two minorities (blacks or women) in these positions at any one time.¹⁵¹

Minorities in Fairfax County did not hesitate to speak publicly of their concerns. On June 8, 1972, for example, Dr. Herman Howard represented the Black Parents for Quality Education before the school board. Dr. Howard spoke of staffing problems and black focus issues. He was

¹⁵⁰G. John Davis, interview, 26 April 1993.

¹⁵¹Fairfax Schools Bulletin, 1974-1979.

particularly concerned about the number of black teachers, counselors, coaches, principals, and administrators in the system. He also advocated sensitivity training for staff and curriculum changes that would better reflect black culture, values, and history. Davis immediately asked the school board to refer Dr. Howard's concerns to the Council for Educational and Human Understanding for a plan of action to be developed to help alleviate the problems.¹⁵²

The Media

One other aspect of Davis' management style was his handling of the media. Although he sometimes complained about media "sensationalism, incomplete coverage, shallow reporting, inaccurate quoting, and incorrect statements,"¹⁵³ Davis' administration was open with the news media and the public. An editorial written on Dr. Davis' appointment as state superintendent acknowledged the following:

As newsmen, we have long admired the openness of the Davis administration. Information on school policy, programs or problems is always readily available. The superintendent is easily access-

¹⁵²Fairfax County School Board, "Minutes of School Board Meeting, 1971-72," 8 June 1972.

¹⁵³G. John Davis, "Can We Get 'Error-free' News Coverage?" The Fairfax Gazette, 25 June 1979.

ible.... We can't recall one time when one reporter was denied sought-for information. George Hamel, who heads the system's information office, is on a top staff level, enjoying the full confidence of the superintendent. For that reason his office is able to quickly provide accurate answers to...questions.¹⁵⁴

The Teflon Shield

The nine years that Jack Davis was Fairfax County's superintendent of schools were good years for Davis. In reviewing the publications of the decade and the summations of Davis' work when he resigned in the summer of 1979, it is surprising how little negative information one can find about the man and his work as superintendent. In a way Davis exhibited the same tendency as Fairfax's superintendent in the 1970s that Ronald Reagan did in the 1980s as President of the United States. Reagan, a man of enormous personal appeal, became known as the "Teflon" president because little of a critical nature stuck to his reputation, and he was enormously popular as he ended his presidency. Jack Davis might be called the "Teflon" superintendent during his Fairfax tenure, because he too finished his administration with popular acclaim. Only the no-confidence vote by the Fairfax Education Association

¹⁵⁴"Journal Opinion: Pluses and Minus," The Fairfax Journal, (n.d.). (From undated, editorial in files, Fairfax County School Board Public Relations Office.)

tarnished his Teflon shield.

Davis' appointment to the state superintendency was greeted in the northern Virginia and Washington press and by that area's governmental officials and the public in a highly positive manner. Headlines such as "Politics Temporarily Put Aside for Farewell to 'Super Jack'" and "Davis' Legacy: An 'Almost Perfect' Record" were the norm and represented the excellent press Davis received during the years of his superintendency. "He's done a tremendous job," said Bill Hoofnagle, former school board chairman and county board of supervisors member.¹⁵³ Even when problems and controversy arose, Davis himself was seldom blamed or criticized. Although there were often budget battles between the school board and the governing body, Davis escaped largely unscathed. He was widely recognized as having kept Fairfax County among the nation's best local school systems.

The Fairfax County School Board was also complimentary of Davis as was the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The most negative statement made about Jack Davis in the public arena came from one of his school board chairmen, William Wrench. In 1975 Wrench told a reporter:

¹⁵³John P. Tarpey, "Politics Temporarily Put Aside for Farewell to 'Super Jack,'" The Washington Star, 27 June 1979, 1.

The needs of the system are changing and I hope Jack can change with them.... I don't think he is moving fast enough to close elementary schools, and I think he's allowed some principals to remain who should be replaced. They have to come to grips with the fact that the traditional curriculum might not be satisfactory for everyone.¹⁵⁶

Even groups that can be expected to become opponents of a school superintendent over a period of years spoke well of Jack Davis. Harley Williams, president of the conservative Fairfax County Taxpayers' Alliance, criticized just about every aspect of county government including the schools. Yet he said of Davis that "considering the forces he's had to deal with, he's a pretty good superintendent. He's not one of these totalitarian ideologues [sic]."¹⁵⁷ John Radcliffe, executive director of the Fairfax Education Association stated, "I wish he was an S.O.B. It would make my job easier. He has the ability to be rational. He doesn't oppose just for the sake of opposition."¹⁵⁸

Tarnish on the Shield

Yet, it was the Fairfax Education Association (FEA) that gave Davis his strongest criticism in Fairfax County.

¹⁵⁶Rosenfeld, "How Does a Good Guy Do So Well?"

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

The FEA often was at odds with Davis because its leaders believed that Davis was too quick to introduce new educational programming. "He's piled program atop program," FEA president Robert Hicks noted. "He's got great ideas, and, basically, he implements them well. But he doesn't always look down the road to see the impact on the classroom teacher."¹⁵⁹

Another complaint came from some of his principals who were not happy with what they saw as the poor fit in education of some business concepts he borrowed. One principal (who preferred to remain anonymous for obvious reasons) was quoted as telling a reporter, "A title of office manager doesn't fit a school principal. These functions are not comparable. Of course, education always has its fads. So, we'll wait this one out."¹⁶⁰ The error-free writing requirement for grades 7-12 was attacked by some teachers as an inappropriate over-reliance on industry's zero-defects model. However, these types of criticisms were relatively few in Davis' nine plus years at the helm of Fairfax County Public Schools.

The only attack that really penetrated the Teflon

¹⁵⁹Franklin, 16.

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

shield of Davis' superintendency came in the final months of his tenure and was related to salary. Although Davis' overall record had been consistent in supporting increases in salary for teachers, and Fairfax teachers had done well in comparison to their Washington, Maryland, and Virginia neighbors, previous support and gains were forgotten in 1979. "Fairfax teachers got an 11.1 percent pay raise this year; the only teachers in the area that got what we asked for," according to Radcliffe of the FEA in 1975. However, in 1979 such past support from Davis was no longer important in teachers' minds. When the board of supervisors granted a 5.15 percent cost-of-living pay increase for all county employees so as not to exceed the seven percent guideline set by President Carter, two votes of "no confidence" were cast against Davis by the FEA in two months, and the teachers approved and began a "work-to-the-rule" protest. Davis viewed the teacher issue as a "conspicuous blemish" on his record.¹⁶¹

Such negative reaction to his work bothered Davis a great deal. Yet, it did not seriously damage his reputation as an administrator. In fact, in Richmond the governor and others in positions of power liked the strength Davis showed in standing up to the teachers and the Fairfax Education

¹⁶¹Zeldis, 1.

Association. His perceived weakness of being pronounion was removed as a barrier to advancement at the state level.

Therefore, when Dr. Eugene Campbell announced his retirement early in 1979, S. John Davis' name was near the top of every list of possible replacements for the superintendent of public instruction. His record as superintendent in Fairfax County made him a logical top contender for the prize that he had almost won in 1975. However, 1979 was a different story, and Jack Davis' ascendancy to head K-12 education in Virginia began a state leadership era that spanned the decade of the 1980s.

Summary

S. John Davis was named superintendent of the Fairfax County Public Schools in 1970. He mastered the art of politics at the local level to the extent that he was unanimously reappointed twice by the school board and served for nine years as the chief school officer of Virginia's largest and the nation's twelfth largest school system.

Dr. Davis proved adept at dealing with educational finances in Fairfax County. As superintendent he implemented a PPBS model for the school system. "Commitment to Education" was developed by Davis, a planning committee, and his school board to identify budget thrusts and set educational goals for budget planning. During the 1970s

operating budgets for schools and teachers' salaries increased in Fairfax County under Dr. Davis' leadership at a rate greater than that of most other school systems across Virginia.

In instruction and educational program development Dr. Davis led Fairfax County schools in curriculum development, staff training, and evaluation follow up in all subject areas in K-12. Strong programs in special and vocational education, English-as-a-second language, and error-free writing, gave Fairfax County a reputation as an innovative school system.

During the Fairfax years Dr. Davis stressed accountability in the school system. A programmed budgeting system, a comprehensive program of studies, and a program audit of instruction and administration became the chief components of the Fairfax accountability model under Davis. High test scores by Fairfax County students also were touted as an accountability measure.

Finally, S. John Davis proved to be a successful manager at the local level. Using his strong personality effectively, Dr. Davis combined elements of classic management theory with human relations and revisionist philosophies of management. He also used management by objectives and systems analysis to ensure efficiency in the schools he managed.

In 1979 Dr. Davis was appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia by Governor John N. Dalton. The Fairfax story was to become the Virginia story.

Chapter 3

THE DALTON YEARS, 1978-1982

Politics

The Governor

Republican John N. Dalton of Radford, after serving in the Virginia General Assembly for eight years and for four years as lieutenant governor in the administration of Governor Mills E. Godwin, was elected governor over Democrat Henry Howell on November 8, 1977. Dalton, who pictured himself as a staunch defender of the state's traditional conservative values, won a decisive victory over Howell, who was viewed as a liberal, consumer-oriented populist not in the Virginia tradition.¹ Dalton's margin of victory, fifty-six percent to forty-four percent, was built on the electorate's perception of the two candidates based on three key issues: (1) the role of labor during the governor's term and after, (2) the level of state taxation, and (3) the future course of the state's economy.² Education did not emerge as a major issue during the campaign.

Candidate Dalton and his advisors had developed the "Red Book" as a blueprint for education after his election.

¹Shelley Rolfe, "Dalton Takes Easy Win Over Howell," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 9 November 1977, A-1.

²Editorial, "Why John Dalton Should Be Elected," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 6 November 1977, C-7.

Co-written by Dr. Woodrow Robinson, a member of the board of education, and several other Republican educators, the "Red Book" espoused a call for a conservative, fundamental approach to education. Both the "Red Book" and Dalton's first State of the Commonwealth speech to the General Assembly as governor expressed similar ideas about the course Dalton hoped to see education take. In his initial address to the legislature his comments on education began as follows:

I know you join me in supporting excellence in our educational system. We must increase our emphasis on the fundamentals, the "back to the basics" approach. I favor the idea of requiring students to show proficiency in the basic skills before they are granted diplomas.³

In addition to stressing excellence, basics, and competency testing, Governor Dalton also emphasized the burden of cost of new programs to the localities, student conduct and discipline, and vocational education expansion. In financing the state's public schools Dalton asked only for minor remodeling of the budget proposed by Governor Godwin. Dalton also retained Godwin's appointee, Dr. W. E. Campbell, as superintendent of public instruction. Dr. J. Wade Gilley, whose professional career had been spent in higher education, was named secretary of education.

³"A Text of Dalton's Address to the General Assembly," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 18 January 1978, A-5.

The State Superintendent

Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson, the fourteenth superintendent of public instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia, served in that capacity for almost fifteen years, a tenure that exceeded the time in office of any of the thirteen previous superintendents in the first one-hundred and three years of the history of the state superintendency.⁴ Dr. W. Eugene Campbell, Wilkerson's successor, served from 1975 until his retirement June 30, 1979. In announcing his retirement four months before the actual date and two and one half years before Governor John N. Dalton's term ended, Dr. Campbell noted that the governor now would be able to offer his replacement an appointment of more than two years and would not have to settle for a "fill-in superintendent."⁵

Early speculation in the press centered on three possible candidates for Campbell's successor as the state's chief education officer. Dr. S. John Davis, superintendent of Fairfax County, and Dr. E. E. Brickell, superintendent of Virginia Beach, were pegged as front

⁴Emmett G. Shufflebarger, Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson: His Life and Work as State Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia, 1960-1974 (Ed. D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1975), 1.

⁵Charles Cox, "State Superintendent Will Retire June 30." Richmond Times Dispatch, 8 March 1979, A-1.

runners partly because they had both been strong competitors for the same position in 1975. Dr. J. Fred Young, the president of Elon College and a key developer of Virginia's school aid formula in the early 1970s, was also listed as a potential applicant for Campbell's position.⁶ Such conjecture as to the identity of the next superintendent of public instruction signaled that the political process was accelerating once again as Governor Dalton prepared to appoint the sixteenth educator to hold that position.

The Search Committee

With Dr. Campbell's retirement from office the Dalton administration was most concerned about continuity and continued progress. Dr. J. Wade Gilley, secretary of education, suggested to the governor that a search committee be appointed to aid in the selection process.⁷ Governor Dalton agreed and appointed a blue-ribbon committee that included Delegate W. L. Lemmon, D-Smyth; Senator Hunter B. Andrews, D-Hampton; and minority legislators Delegate Ray L. Garland, R-Roanoke, and Senator A. Joe Canada, Jr., R-Virginia Beach. Also placed on the committee were board of education members Henry W. Tulloch of Waynesboro,

⁶Ibid.

⁷J. Wade Gilley, telephone conversation with author, 3 January 1994.

Elizabeth G. Helm of Winchester, and Mark Fravel, Jr., of Chesapeake. Tulloch, chairman of the state board, was named chairman of the search committee. Secretary of Education J. Wade Gilley was asked to serve as secretary to the committee and chief liaison to the governor.⁸

Soon after the names of the committee members were made public, concern was raised that no minority representation had been placed on the committee. Reacting to the criticism, Governor Dalton added a distinguished black college president to the committee. Dr. Allix James, head of Virginia Union College and a member of the Board of Education, became the ninth member of the search committee.⁹

By March 16, 1979, the committee had met, organized, developed the process that they would follow, and set a timetable for their work. The committee decided to advertise nationally and did so in late March. Candidates would be screened in early May and recommendations would be given to the governor by May 18. At the same time, three more prominent educators had also emerged as candidates for the job. These included William H. Cochran, deputy

⁸Staff, "Influential Pair in Search," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 10 May 1979, B-4.

⁹Allix B. James, telephone conversation with author, 21 April 1994.

superintendent and number two man to Dr. Campbell in the department; Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., one of four assistant superintendents in the department of education; and Dr. M. E. Alford, division superintendent in Portsmouth City.¹⁰

The search committee received seventy-six applications, and then screened the list to fourteen individuals, of whom eight were chosen for personal interviews. These eight semi-finalists were then cut to a list of four finalists, whose names and credentials were then submitted to Governor Dalton. The governor was to make the final choice, either from the list of finalists or someone else of his choosing.¹¹

Questions for the Candidates

The search committee prepared a list of five questions which each one of the fourteen semi-finalists had to answer in written form. These questions dealt with an applicant's finances, health, criminal record, partisan politics, and job concept. Seven additional questions were then readied for the eight candidates who were invited to answer them at an interview before the entire committee. One hour was

¹⁰Staff, "State to Advertise for School Chief," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 17 March 1979, B-1.

¹¹John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Undated News Release, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

established as the time allotted for each interview, and May 13 and May 14 were set as the dates for the interviews themselves.¹²

The seven interview questions for the next superintendent of public instruction were as follows:

(1) What are the causes of decline in student achievement in the last ten years and what would you do to reverse that trend? (2) What are the needs of local school divisions and what would you do to meet those needs? (3) How do you feel about collective bargaining for teachers? (4) How do you feel about competency tests for students? (5) What is the superintendent's responsibility to the state board, to the executive branch, and to the General Assembly? (6) What is your opinion of Virginia's Standards of Quality? (7) How do you feel about tenure and accountability?¹³

Dr. Davis Applies

S. John Davis made his intentions to seek the state superintendency known in a letter to Chairman Tulloch dated April 5, 1979, and in a submission of his Vita for consideration by the search committee to Secretary Gilley on

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

the same date.¹⁴ A month later Dr. Davis sent his reply to the five personal questions. He avowed that he had no health problems and no criminal charges had been placed against him; he had not been active in partisan politics; and his personal finances could stand close scrutiny. He then explained his concept of the job he sought and why he was the best person to fill it. According to Dr. Davis,

The primary task of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia is to provide the leadership to ensure that the educational opportunities for all Virginians--including the handicapped, the gifted, the poor, the wealthy, minorities, young people, and adults--are of the highest quality. The Superintendent must work harmoniously with the State Board, the General Assembly, the Governor and his staff, special interest groups, and the populace as a whole.¹⁵

Dr. Davis also noted that the state superintendent must have intimate knowledge of the legislative process and the role of the state board of education. He stressed his nine-year superintendency in the state's largest school division, his term as president of the Virginia Association of School Administrators, and his continued involvement in state-wide

¹⁴John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive papers, Letter from S. John Davis to Henry W. Tulloch and Vita to J. Wade Gilley, 5 April 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

¹⁵John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive papers, Letter from S. John Davis to Henry W. Tulloch, chairman of the Search Committee, 5 April 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

activities. At the federal level he claimed that he had knowledge and a record of constructively questioning inappropriate mandates. He also felt that he could handle financial affairs on a state level. Furthermore, the excellent instructional program in Fairfax County, he thought, was indicative of the results he would expect to achieve for the entire state.

Dr. Davis also noted that his successes in Fairfax had not been achieved alone. "My greatest strength," he wrote, "is the ability to recognize and employ the most competent people in various fields, provide leadership and environment which permits them to produce quality programs." He believed that the state superintendency demanded "an instructional leader, a manager, a diplomat, an expert in public and human relations, and an individual who can command respect of peers and others." He concluded by stating that "I am confident that I possess the necessary qualities."¹⁶

The Political Process

During March, April, and May while the governor's committee was conducting its search, the political process attempting to influence the committee and ultimately the

¹⁶Ibid.

governor continued. Governor Dalton's executive papers show that numerous letters were written to the committee and to the governor in support of various candidates. Letters were written on behalf of E. B. Howerton and William H. Cochran of the department of education and in behalf of E. E. Brickell, Ken Fulp, Jim Anderson, William Ellena, and S. John Davis, all sitting division superintendents.

Of some historical note perhaps was a letter to Governor Dalton from George F. Allen, Jr., a Charlottesville attorney.¹⁷ The future governor urged Dalton to appoint Dr. William H. Cochran superintendent of public instruction. Dr. Cochran's letter of support was obtained by some of his friends. He did not know George Allen personally.¹⁸

Of special interest were two letters to Governor Dalton that were negative toward Dr. Davis. The first was from B. Philip Bigler of Herndon, Virginia. He noted that he was a dues paying Republican in Virginia and had been a teacher in Fairfax County for the past four years. He wrote:

Mr. Davis' policies have served to increase the bureaucracy and destroy the morale of educators. This prompted a "no confidence" vote in his leadership ability recently. I am proud to say that I voted for such a censure of this man.

¹⁷John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Letter from George F. Allen to Governor John N. Dalton, 14 May 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

¹⁸William H. Cochran, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 7 January 1994.

If you allow Davis to do to the State what he has done to Fairfax, you will see further job actions throughout the Commonwealth.¹⁹

The second letter to Governor Dalton was from Mr. and Mrs. Phil D. Gilliland of Falls Church, Virginia and asked the chief executive to reconsider the appointment of S. John Davis as Virginia State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Gillilands wrote:

We feel that his disciplinary actions toward Fairfax County High School students in recent student activities which supported the teachers has resulted in a negative learning atmosphere. We feel that Dr. Davis over-reacted to the situation which could have been handled more empathetically.²⁰

The Appointment

On May 14, 1979, the search committee finished its interviews, selected four finalists by secret ballot, and then forwarded the four names to Governor Dalton. The finalists were Dr. S. John Davis, division superintendent of schools in Fairfax County; Dr. Daniel B. Taylor, state superintendent of schools in West Virginia; Dr. Thomas L. Rickey, division superintendent of schools in Pascagoula,

¹⁹John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Letter from B. Philip Bigler to Governor John N. Dalton, 30 May 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

²⁰John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Letter from Mr. and Mrs. Phil D. Gilliland to Governor John N. Dalton, 6 June 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

Mississippi; and Dr. Everett B. Howerton, Jr., assistant superintendent for personnel and administrative field services in the Virginia Department of Education.²¹

With the nominee at his side, Governor Dalton made it official on May 18, 1979, when he announced the appointment of the new superintendent of public instruction. S. John Davis, the Fairfax superintendent, had reached a coveted goal in his career.

"I am delighted to make this appointment," said Governor Dalton. "I believe that Dr. Davis will bring to the administration a rare combination of proven administrative ability and intellectual capacity."²²

The educational writer for the Richmond Times-Dispatch noted in the opening sentence of his article on the appointment that capital observers were saying that "Mr. Nice Guy could shake the state department of education tree to its roots after he takes over." After the announcement Dr. Davis reaffirmed his opposition to public worker collective bargaining and restated his reservations about the state's new high school minimum competency test. Davis also agreed that the challenge (and prestige) of his new job

²¹John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Report to Governor Dalton from the Search Committee, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

²²Charles Cox, "Fairfax Superintendent Named State School Chief," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 19 May 1979, A-1.

made the pay cut that he was taking--\$55,000 to \$51,000--more palatable.²³

The new superintendent of public instruction came to his post after "the most extensive search ever made in the Commonwealth for a State Superintendent." The search committee spent \$3,074 advertising in six out-of-state newspapers and \$366 for ads in six state newspapers. There were three blacks and five women among the seventy-six applicants.²⁴

The governor and Dr. Davis were both congratulated and commended for and on the appointment. Letters from Hunter B. Andrews, Senate of Virginia; Robert W. Wilson, Chief Administrator, Montgomery County, Maryland; and Gilbert P. Richardson, Executive Director, American Association for the Study of the United States in World Affairs, were indicative of the support the appointment received. Gilbert Richardson's letter gave the most partisan twist to the proceedings in noting to Davis that "you and Governor Dalton are planting the American two-party system in the heart of the Old Confederacy."²⁵

²³Ibid.

²⁴Charles Cox, "Four Proposed for School Chief," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 15 May 1979, A-1.

²⁵John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Letter from Gilbert P. Richardson to S. John Davis, 19 May 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

Newspaper accounts of Dr. Davis' appointment expressed a positive viewpoint. "Davis comes to his new job with what looks like universal applause--despite the fact that he's leaving the Fairfax County supervisory post in what is described as a mood of frustration." Although Davis had been the object of protests from teachers over inadequate salary increases in Fairfax County, Robert Hicks, president of the Fairfax County Education Association, said that Davis would make one of the best state superintendents Virginia has had.²⁶

Dr. J. Wade Gilley, Dalton's secretary of education and secretary to the search committee, has confirmed that Dr. Davis' selection as a finalist was unanimous by the committee. He also noted that Davis' selection was bipartisan and non-political. Davis was selected because he was about the right age (50); he had experience as head of the state's largest school division; he was considered a leader among state's superintendents; he had a national reputation; he was acceptable to leaders in both political parties; and he could work well with all groups--General Assembly, state board, executive branch, local superin-

²⁶Jack Chamberlain, "State Schools' New Leader," Roanoke Times and World News, 29 May 1979, A-6.

tendents, and local school boards.²⁷

Willard L. "Bill" Lemmon, chairman of the Education Committee of the House of Delegates and search committee member, also was confident that Jack Davis' appointment was not a political appointment. Lemmon, a Democrat from Marion, admired the way the Republican governor handled the selection of the state superintendent. Lemmon also confirmed that Davis' selection as a finalist by the search committee was unanimous. Lemmon believed that Davis was by far the strongest candidate that came to the committee in the interview process. Lemmon's analysis of other candidates included an observation that Dr. Cochran was of the old order which tended to meet behind closed doors and had not changed with the times. Dr. Howerton was considered too young and not seasoned enough. The out-of-state finalists were good men and solid educators, but underlying sentiment was for an in-state person if at all possible.²⁸

Superintendent Davis' interviews with the media, soon after his appointment was announced, showed that he believed the state should provide leadership and guidelines for local educators, not control them. He also stressed his belief in fiscal and instructional accountability. He believed that

²⁷Gilley, telephone conversation, 3 January 1994.

²⁸Willard L. Lemmon, telephone conversation with author, 30 November 1992.

good teachers would do the job if they knew exactly what they were expected to do and that students would do their best if teachers expected the best. Davis also expressed his pride that Fairfax County under his leadership had moved into special education programming two years before federal and state laws forced public schools into action. He also pledged to work for improved communications between teachers and administrators in his new position.²⁹

Davis and the Executive Branch

S. John Davis came to Richmond with the obvious political support of the executive branch of state government. Governor Dalton and Secretary Gilley expected Davis to work closely with them as a part of the administration. In the Dalton administration the secretary of education turned most of his attention to higher education, which was, as Secretary Gilley later stated, "my field."³⁰ Jack Davis' expertise was in K-12 education, and his role was to work with the independent board of education. Dr. Gilley's primary interaction with Davis was in developing the executive budget as Gilley worked at the

²⁹Jack Chamberlain, "Educator: New Schools' Chief Favors Leadership, Not Control," Roanoke Times and World News, 10 June 1979, B-1.

³⁰Gilley, telephone conversation, 3 January 1994.

cabinet level to help put the governor's budget together. According to Gilley, Davis worked cooperatively with him and with the legislative branch. He was honest and could be depended upon to give representatives of both branches of government the correct information about education and educational finances. Neither Governor Dalton nor Secretary Gilley ever had any regrets about appointing Jack Davis as their chief public education officer.³¹

Dr. Davis has confirmed that Secretary Gilley did give his energy to higher education. Governor Dalton assigned responsibility and authority and "then was there if needed." Dalton's main instruction to Davis was that he wanted to bring improvement in educational programs for all students across the state.³²

J. Wade Gilley expressed the administration's political opinion and expectation of Davis to a reporter a few months after Jack Davis took office when he was quoted as stating:

Jack Davis doesn't work with a lot of fanfare. However, I think if you'll draw a line in 1979, when he came and another in, let's say 1985, you will see a remarkable change. It will all be done with the local school divisions, the teachers, and the General Assembly putting things together.... It's part of his style to have a lot of people

³¹Ibid.

³²S. John Davis, interview with author, Midlothian, Virginia, 3 June 1992.

help him get to where he wants to go."³

Davis and the Legislative Branch

Dr. Davis officially took office August 1, 1979, and he was acutely aware that in a little over five months the General Assembly would convene. Although Davis had appeared before various committees of the House and Senate, he was not overly familiar with nor on a name-face recognition basis with senior members of the legislature. Agency heads in Richmond routinely sent representatives to the General Assembly and to committee meetings. Dr. Davis decided not to operate that way. He believed that members of the legislature were in Richmond for such a short time and that their decisions made such a major impact on public schools that he had to meet with them in person. He needed to get to know legislators and establish credibility; therefore, he devoted his main focus to capitol hill while the General Assembly was in town. He did not attend the annual meeting of the American Association of School Administrators which always fell during the General Assembly session.

Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., assistant superintendent for personnel and administrative field services, was Dr. Davis'

³Lawrence Feinburg, "Head of Virginia Schools Wins Praise As He Pushes Change, "The Washington Post, 28 April 1980, C-1.

point man from the department with the General Assembly. Dr. Howerton covered meetings of the education committees of both houses of the legislature. Especially in the first several years that Dr. Davis was state superintendent, he and Howerton divided the duties. One concentrated on the House of Delegates; the other, on the Senate. Dr. Davis felt that the department needed two contacts with the General Assembly. In addition to the two education committees and the House Appropriations and the Senate Finance committees, the department of education (DOE) also monitored sub-committees. Dr. Davis soon saw that sub-committee recommendations which went to the entire committee were usually accepted; so a strategy was devised that had a DOE spokesman present to attest to education bills coming before the sub-committee.³⁴

Dr. Howerton, who had been one of the four finalists Governor Dalton had considered for the top position, was a major player in Davis' superintendency, especially in legislative matters. Howerton had been brought to the department of education as a legislative liaison and also as a liaison with other statewide educationally related groups such as the Virginia Education Association (VEA), the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA), the Virginia

³⁴S. John Davis, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 4 February 1994.

Association of School Administrators (VASA), the State Council of Higher Education, and the Community College System. Howerton and Davis divided responsibility on legislative issues. Howerton handled routine bills while Davis came in when it was important for the state superintendent to be heard. The two also coordinated schedules for other department experts who were brought to the hill to testify. Often Davis would go to the General Assembly for committee meetings, and then stop by legislative offices to talk personally to a chairman or an influential member.³⁵

According to Dr. William H. Cochran, Davis' deputy superintendent of public instruction, Jack's approach legislatively and politically was to spend time working with individual legislators. His political and public relations skills with legislators were good.³⁶ Dr. Callie P. Shingleton, administrative director of general education in the department when Dr. Davis came to Richmond, has confirmed Davis' penchant for working one-on-one with members of the General Assembly. His approach was to do favors for legislators, get them needed information, and

³⁵Everett B. Howerton, Jr., telephone conversation with author, 11 March 1994.

³⁶Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

help them whenever asked. Dr. Shingleton heard him say on several occasions that it was time for him to "call in his chips." He had done something for a legislator, now he needed a vote or help in return, and he did not hesitate to remind the General Assembly member.³⁷

Davis and the Board of Education

Dr. Davis worked with the Virginia Board of Education much as he had earlier with the Fairfax County School Board. Over the years the state board had become more independent and more active in its role.³⁸ Dr. Davis was proactive, and he wanted the board to be proactive as well. Davis kept the board informed. Dr. Davis pushed his own viewpoint at times, but he also deferred to the board on occasion. His tendency was to cooperate with the state board.³⁹

"Only once or twice did I ever hear him point out that he had constitutional powers as superintendent of public instruction," reported W. L. "Bill" Lemmon, who served on the state board after retiring from the General Assembly.⁴⁰

³⁷Callie P. Shingleton, telephone conversation with author, 6 January 1994.

³⁸Harry L. Smith, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 7 February 1994.

³⁹Shingleton, telephone conversation, 4 February 1994.

⁴⁰W. L. Lemmon, interview with author, Marion, Virginia, 18 January 1993.

Board of education members were urged by Dr. Davis to call senior staff members like Ben Howerton, Callie Shingleton, and Mike Cale to get information first hand. Davis also spent considerable time building personal relationships and working one-on-one with board members.⁴¹

Dr. Davis communicated with at least two or three board members virtually every day. Friday afternoons, especially during the weeks the General Assembly was in session, were set aside for one-on-one briefings by telephone with board members. Davis encouraged board members to call top staff for information or answers to questions that the staff member was most knowledgeable about.⁴²

The board of education during the two and one half years of the Dalton administration that S. John Davis served as state superintendent was in transition as it became more proactive and independent. The eleven board members who served during this period were a diverse group: three attorneys, two college educators, one retired public school educator, one industrialist, two business leaders, and two civic activists were represented on the board. Table 6 shows the members of the board during Davis' first years as the state's chief school officer.

⁴¹Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

⁴²Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

Table 6

Members of the Virginia Board Of Education, 1979-1981

Members	1979	1980	1981
Henry W. Tulloch Waynesboro, Businessman	a	X	X
Dr. Mark Fravel, Jr. Chesapeake, College Professor	X	X	X
Elizabeth G. Helm Winchester, College Administrator	X	X	
Dr. Allix B. James Richmond, College President	X	b	b
H. Ronnie Montgomery Jonesville, Lawyer	X	X	X
Dr. Woodrow W. Robinson Woodstock, Educator	X	X	X
Elizabeth M. Rogers Franklin, Business Woman	X		
Thomas R. Watkins Hampton, Lawyer	X	X	X
Kenneth S. White Lynchburg, Lawyer	X	X	X
Margaret S. Marston Arlington, Civic Leader		X	X
Avis W. Pringle Bassett, Civic Leader		X	X

a President of state board in 1979

b President of state board in 1980 and 1981

Davis and the Virginia Education Association (VEA)

S. John Davis was also cognizant of the fifty-thousand member Virginia Education Association and worked to gain the support of that politically active professional organization. Davis included VEA members as an integral part of the process as he and his staff established new programs.⁴³ When the Standards of Learning Program was developed, for example, Dr. Callie P. Shingleton, the staff person responsible for its advancement, was told by Dr. Davis to work with the VEA and to include VEA teacher representatives at each grade level of objective building.⁴⁴

Early in his tenure as superintendent of public instruction, S. John Davis urged giving financial pay boosts to the most outstanding ten to fifteen percent of Virginia's teachers. This career ladder/merit pay plan was presented as a "sensible, practical response to a particular problem, not as a sweeping reform."⁴⁵

"We're very comfortable with Jack Davis," said Suzanne

⁴³Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

⁴⁴Shingleton, telephone conversation, 6 January 1994.

⁴⁵Lawrence Feinberg, "Head of Virginia's Schools Wins Praise as He Pushes Change," Washington Post, 28 April 1980, B-1.

Kelly, the president of the VEA in April of 1980. This approval was given even though the VEA had already denounced Davis' career ladder initiative as "an old monster in a new costume." Kelly added, "I think the great majority of teachers are doing an excellent job. It's unfair to distinguish among them."⁴⁶

Ms. Kelly also iterated that she believed Davis' motivation in proposing the plan was good, and she would continue to participate in advisory groups about it. An unnamed DOE official summed up Davis' political thrust with the VEA as follows: "Jack is going to go out and win the public and win the VEA. He's very much more adept at public relations than Campbell was both in the good and bad sense of the word."⁴⁷

Davis, the Lobbyist

Superintendent Davis also hosted a series of dinners, paid for by the department of education, at "Le Chef," an expensive French restaurant in downtown Richmond. These dinners were described by a reporter as "a subtle form of lobbying, unusual here for a state official."⁴⁸ The

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

dinners were held on the night before the state board's monthly meeting and included at various times leaders of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, VSBA, VEA, and several school administrators' groups.

Dr. Davis believed, "It's a wonderful opportunity to hear from state-wide groups, for people to sit down comfortably and talk things over with each other."

"Jack Davis is a wonderful host," said one woman who attended the dinners. "I really think he listens to you. But sometimes I think we have to say, 'Hey, where are we going with him?'"⁴⁹

This description of Davis' dinners sums up well the political Jack Davis. He was a talented political operator who used his personality and his personal relations skills deliberately to achieve the educational ends he had in mind.

Davis, on the Road

A prime example of Dr. Davis' political approach came in his response to becoming a state official after having been a local superintendent. The main adjustment that Davis made in Richmond was casting the local viewpoint aside and learning to see the impact of an issue, a bill, or a program statewide. The impact on a Lee County, a Virginia Beach, a

⁴⁹Feinberg, B-4

Highland County, and a Middlesex County now had to be considered along with the impact on Northern Virginia. Davis' political answer was to spend "every opportunity to visit, address a teacher convocation at the start of a school year, speak at graduations." Davis also realized that there was a suspicion that since he came from Fairfax County, he probably could not understand the problems of rural areas, coal mining areas of Southwest Virginia, or the Southside tobacco growing region.⁵⁰

Davis traveled widely across the state and made many speeches. His files of speeches made shows that in 1980 and 1981, the first full year of his state superintendency, Davis made four to five speeches most weeks. He criss-crossed the state from the mountains to the seashore, from the valley to the North Carolina line. Harry L. Smith--the department of education's confidant to state superintendents, chief public information officer, and speech writer for superintendents of public instruction from W. Woodrow Wilkerson to William C. Bosher--has described Davis as the "best front man" for public education" that he has worked for. Davis was highly visible, worked with organizations and people well, and emphasized public relations. He also was sensitive to problems that might

⁵⁰Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

arise. He knew how to move to take action to try to avoid differences that might occur.⁵¹

In March 1980 Davis announced "Campaign '80 for Public Education." This communications effort was begun to encourage school administrators, teachers, and other school personnel to inform the public about some of the achievements of the public schools.⁵² Dr. Davis used "Campaign '80" as a main topic in numerous speeches to various organizations. For example, on March 20, 1980, he spoke to the Future Homemakers Leadership Conference and said, "This is an appropriate occasion to tell you about Virginia's 'Campaign '80 for Public Education' and to emphasize the important role of your organization in helping to make this campaign a success."⁵³

On March 22, 1980, he made similar remarks in a speech to a conference of the Virginia Educational Media Association at Virginia State University,⁵⁴ and on April

⁵¹Harry L. Smith, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 4 February 1994.

⁵²Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1979-80, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1981, xiii.

⁵³S. John Davis, Speech to the Future Homemakers of America, 20 March 1980, personal files, Midlothian, Virginia.

⁵⁴S. John Davis, Speech to Virginia Educational Media Association, 22 March 1980, personal files, Midlothian, Virginia.

18, 1980, he emphasized the same message of "letting the public know about the achievements that are taking place in public school"⁵⁵ at a regional middle school forum.

When Jack Davis became state superintendent, one of his worst political handicaps was the way that he was perceived in the rural areas of Southwest and Southside Virginia, the so-called disparity belt so different from affluent northern Virginia and Fairfax County. Davis worked hard to assuage this feeling of mistrust through personal contacts and numerous visits to local school divisions. He also developed personal friendships with superintendents like Jim D. Graham of Wise County in the far southwestern part of Virginia.⁵⁶ Davis seemed to understand this perceived weakness, and he worked to overcome it.

Funding

In Fairfax County S. John Davis had increased funding for education; but when he resigned as division superintendent, he was not satisfied with teachers' salaries or with what he saw as a decline in support for financing public education in the county. In Fairfax Davis was

⁵⁵S. John Davis, Speech to Central Virginia Middle School Forum, 18 April 1980, personal files, Midlothian, Virginia.

⁵⁶Jim D. Graham, telephone conversation with author, 23 February 1994.

working with a wealthy county and with a populace and elected officials who were usually supportive of public education. Most Fairfax citizens wanted their schools to be of high quality for their children and were willing to pay for that quality. On the other hand, the state's effort had not been as strong in support of public education as Davis had been accustomed to in Fairfax County.

At the time Davis began his era of leadership in K-12 education at the state level, the state and the nation were faced with significant problems associated with high inflation rates and greatly increasing costs for energy. In Virginia the educational funding problems also centered around two interrelated issues. One was, as Dr. Davis had highlighted as the president of VASA, centered in the debate over the shared responsibility of the cost of education between the state and the localities. The argument was over whether or not the state's share of the cost of the Standards of Quality was realistic and based on the actual cost of the standards. The second issue was reflected in the continued decline in the state average salary for classroom teachers. By the end of the decade of the 1970s, average teachers' salaries in Virginia had fallen \$2,148 below the national average of \$19,157.⁵⁷ Teachers and

⁵⁷"A Study of Teachers' Salaries," Virginia Education Association, Richmond, Virginia, March 1979, 3.

others associated with public education were increasingly concerned about how the state was meeting its obligations and about how Virginia was to be perceived pertaining to its support of teachers and education itself. Superintendent Davis' response to these difficult funding crises reveal much about his leadership and ultimate contribution to education.

The 1980-82 Biennial Budget

When S. John Davis took office on August 1, 1979, the budget process for the 1980-82 biennium was already well under way using the model for budget preparation that had been recommended by the Commission on State Governmental Management. Senator William Hopkins, D-Roanoke, had chaired this commission's comprehensive study of Virginia's government from 1973 to 1978. More than sixty pieces of legislation were approved bringing numerous changes to the legislative and executive branches of government.⁵⁸

Following the guidelines set by the Hopkins Commission, Governor Dalton, through his cabinet, notified state agencies of a targeted amount for the projected executive budget. The state agency then developed a budget based on

⁵⁸Clifton A. Woodrum, "Hopkins Commission: Model for Government Reform," Roanoke Times and World-News, 14 May 1994, A-9.

the governor's goals. If the state agency established monetary needs greater than the projected amount, then the governor and the appropriate secretary would listen carefully to the reasons for which the additional money was requested.⁵⁹

Dr. Davis and the board of education interpreted Governor Dalton's and Secretary Gilley's budget targets for education as minimum. Both Dr. Davis and Secretary Gilley viewed the amounts as negotiable. Dr. Gilley was open for discussion, especially if the superintendent and state board could justify the need for what they were requesting.⁶⁰

The budget process for education had begun for the 1980-82 budget when Secretary Gilley officially notified Henry Tulloch, chairman of the board of education, and W. E. Campbell, superintendent of public instruction, of budget targets for the department of education and public schools in the Commonwealth. The target amount was \$1,867,650,921 in general funds, or an increase of \$204,730,006 over the 1978-80 amount of \$1,662,920,915, and \$333,000,000 in special funds. The Standards of Quality (SOQ) cost per pupil was figured to increase at the rate of seven percent per year in the biennium, \$1,027 in the first

⁵⁹Gilley, telephone conversation, 3 January 1994.

⁶⁰Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

year and \$1,099 in the second year, an increase from \$960 in 1979-80. Categorical aid programs were also scheduled for seven percent per year increases and were adjusted for projected decline in average daily membership. Fringe benefits paid by the state under the SOQ funding formula were to be figured at the new rate of 7.33 percent in the retirement system contribution for 58 instructional personnel per 1,000 pupils in average daily membership. The state share of contributions to social security was to reflect the retirement contribution above. The department of education itself was to have a no-growth posture and would receive an increase of \$647,205 earmarked for pupil testing. Any amount required above the targeted figures should be fully justified and assigned a priority, both within line items and within the total budget for financial assistance for local school divisions.⁶¹

The department of education and the board of education then prepared a budget for the 1980-82 biennium, and Dr. William E. Cochran, deputy superintendent, presented the proposed budget to the board at its July 1979 meeting at the Homestead. The board at that time approved a proposed budget subject to changes needed after a public hearing on

⁶¹John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Letter from J. Wade Gilley to Henry W. Tulloch, 1 May 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

September 27.

The approval of a motion by Elizabeth G. Helm of Winchester was significant in the development of the state board's 1980-82 biennial budget. Mrs. Helms' motion based the budget on the actual cost per pupil in average daily membership in 1977-78. Based on actual cost data, the new per pupil amount was set at \$977 plus 10.9 percent for the cost of living increase for 1977-78 and an assumed inflation rate of nine percent for 1979-80, 1980-81, and 1981-82.⁶²

This action was significant for two reasons: first, the percent of increase was higher than the 7 percent targeted by Governor Dalton. Second, the board of education reverted back to the pre-1978-80 biennial budget and used the actual cost per pupil figures for the budget. In the 1978-80 budget the governor and secretary of education had not taken what localities actually spent, averaged them, and worked that figure into the SOQ formula. Instead, they had arbitrarily set the amount, dropping top figures, and under valuing the cost of the Standards of Quality. Both Dr. Cochran, who presented the proposed budget, and Dr. Davis, who was at the July board meeting, preparing to take office August 1, believed the method used in 1978-80 violated the

⁶²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia
"Minutes, 1979," 50, 20 July 1979, 112.

constitution and possibly subjected the state to legal action by local governments."³

Secretary Gilley continued the negotiating process with the board of education in a letter to Henry W. Tullock, president of the board. The administration's position as expressed by the secretary was that the tentatively approved budget request was greater than the projected figures that the governor wanted to see. Gilley suggested that "the Board...restructure its budget request, ...establish some priorities, and propose alternatives by which the State could provide the required financing of public schools over time."⁴

After the September 27 public hearing, the board of education met in Williamsburg for its regular monthly meeting. F. Brent Sandidge, assistant superintendent for administration and finance, presented Superintendent Davis' recommendations of revisions for the 1980-82 budget which had tentatively been adopted in July. The revisions reflected the actual basic aid cost per pupil of \$1,060 in 1978-79, an 8.5 percent increase over the previous year and a 9 percent increase for each year thereafter. The

³Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

⁴John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive papers, Letter from J. Wade Gilley to Henry W. Tullock, 13 September 1979, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

revisions reflected a reduction in basic aid of \$29,335,989, which was then added to, and divided among, six areas stressed in the public hearing: gifted and talented, summer school, declining enrollment, remediation, transportation, and regionalization.⁶⁵ The \$2.5 billion budget figure for public education was \$300 million more than the target given to the education department by Governor Dalton.

After the October board meeting, Dr. Davis said that he believed the governor would make every effort to give the board of education the \$2.5 billion that it had requested.⁶⁶ However, the budget that Governor Dalton submitted to the General Assembly was approximately \$300 million short of the state board's request. The budget bill actually approved by the legislature and signed by Governor Dalton was for \$2,226 billion in state and special funds and fell \$275 million short of the total preferred by Davis and the state board. This figure did represent a budget increase of \$281 million (14.4 percent) over the amount approved for the 1978-80 biennium. SOQ per pupil amounts were increased from \$960 in 1979-80 to \$1,075 in 1980-81 and to \$1,099 in 1981-82. The major new initiatives

⁶⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 11 October 1979, 150.

⁶⁶Charles Cox, "Virginia School Budget," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 11 October 1979, B-1.

in the budget did include funds to help finance remedial programs for low-achieving students in K-3 and in grades 8 and 9; funds to assist school divisions with declining enrollments; and increased allotment for summer school, gifted and talented, transportation, and regionalization of vocational and special education programs.⁶⁷ Although Davis and the board did not receive as large an increase as they wanted, they did achieve some of their new initiatives.

The new initiatives were incorporated into the budget as Dr. Davis identified needs and received suggestions from various sources across the state. The problem of declining enrollment and resultant funding losses was brought to Davis' attention by the Martinsville City School Board. Davis had met with that board on one of his forays into the hinterland and had been impressed with its struggle to absorb enrollment loss. The decision to spread the loss over the biennium did help localities that found they could not cut staff, transportation, maintenance, and other services to students in the same ratio that funds were cut by the state.⁶⁸ The new remediation funding initiative gained passage when Senator Ed Willey of Richmond realized that

⁶⁷Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1979-80, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1981.

⁶⁸Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

this mechanism was a way to help his urban constituents gain substantial funding. The collaboration between Davis and Willey on this matter cemented a good working relationship between the two men that would result in other new funding for education over the next several years.⁶⁹

Dr. Davis suffered a major loss in the 1980 General Assembly when his request for funds to develop the Standards of Learning program was denied. The belief by many that a statewide curriculum was being proposed led to the failure. Davis then turned to the department budget to find the funds to begin the program on a smaller scale than he had originally proposed.⁷⁰

Future Funding Needs

After the General Assembly adjourned in March of 1980, the board of education continued to study state school finances to prepare for future funding requests. At the May board meeting Dr. Davis pointed out that when all annual reports were received from localities for the 1979-80 school year, actual costs would be much higher than anticipated

⁶⁹Davis, interview, 4 February 1994 and Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

⁷⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1980," 51, 28 March 1980, 58.

when budget requests were made.⁷¹ In June Dr. Davis and the board identified the primary financial issues for education in the 1982-84 biennium in response to Secretary of Education Gilley's request. The issues identified were the cost of education, the cost of special programs, teachers' salaries, sources of funding, and accountability.⁷² In July the board began budget consideration for 1981-82, the second year of the biennium.⁷³ At its September meeting, the annual reports on basic aid costs revealed, as Dr. Davis had predicted in May, that the calculated cost per pupil was \$1,259 in 1980-81 and with adjustments for inflation would be \$1,372 for 1981-82.⁷⁴ The budget for 1980-81 was based on an anticipated cost per pupil of \$1,099, or \$160 less than actually spent by the school divisions to meet the SOQ mandates.

At the same time the School Finance Study Commission was investigating aspects of financing public education in Virginia. A subcommittee, chaired by Delegate Willard L. Lemmon, chairman of the House Education Committee, was discussing the composite index, equalization, municipal

⁷¹Ibid., 22 May 1980, 81.

⁷²Ibid., 27 June 1980, 100.

⁷³Ibid., 25 July 1980, 111.

⁷⁴Ibid., 26 September 1980, 127.

overburden, and add-on vocational and special education funds. Senator Hunter Andrews was chairing another subcommittee that was seeking to determine the much debated actual cost of the Standards of Quality.⁷⁵

The board requested additional funds for the 1981-82 school year, and the governor submitted amendments to the 1980-82 budget for 1981-82 for an increase of \$45,194,640.⁷⁶ The 1981 General Assembly authorized an additional \$49,013,775 in basic aid funds for the SOQ program in 1981-82. The legislature increased per pupil support from \$1,099 to \$1,185, a figure still approximately \$187 less than the actual cost.⁷⁷ The board and Dr. Davis had two major funding concerns as it prepared for the 1982-84 biennium: the need to increase teachers' salaries, which were about \$2,800 below the national average, and the need to increase state basic aid funds for the localities.⁷⁸

The Standards of Quality and Teachers' Salaries

As soon as the General Assembly adjourned in 1981, the

⁷⁵Ibid., 26 September 1980, 132.

⁷⁶Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1981," 52, 23 January 1981, 5.

⁷⁷Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1980-81, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1982, xi.

⁷⁸Ibid.

state board set as its number one priority aid to the localities for foundation funding of the Standards of Quality and agreed that basic aid in the state had been underfunded.⁷⁹ Dr. Davis then tied teachers' salaries to any improved SOQ figure and noted that the number one item would be the SOQ figure as it related to teacher salaries.⁸⁰ The board approved Dr. Davis' request that staff be permitted to discuss these concepts with other groups in the state.

In February the results of a board questionnaire confirmed aid to localities as the number one priority. The board discussed at staff's direction the need to recognize variations in the cost of education around the state. The concept of a variable SOQ amount for the state was discussed for the first time with some reservations stated.⁸¹

By April the board was discussing a benchmark approach for improving teachers' salaries. Dr. Davis reported that there were two ways to establish a benchmark: (1) to look at average teachers' salaries in adjoining states and (2) to look at the national average. He believed that there was a \$2,000 to \$3,000 difference between Virginia's average

⁷⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1981," 52, 27 February 1981, 29.

⁸⁰Ibid., 24 April 1981, 63.

⁸¹Ibid., 27 February 1981, 29.

salaries and either of the two approaches. Davis suggested that the first item on the 1982-84 addendum budget might be a focus on SOQ funding and the second could be improving teacher salaries with matching funds earmarked for that purpose. The budget target from the administration was \$324 million more than the previous budget but \$570 million less than the department had projected. The bulk of the request was in SOQ costs.⁸² In May, as the board continued with the development of the 1982-84 budget, the focus was on whether or not teacher salaries were to be separated from basic aid.⁸³

At the February meeting of the board Dr. Davis announced that F. Brent Sandidge, his chief finance officer in the department, was resigning to become superintendent of Manassas City.⁸⁴ One month later Davis recommended Myron E. (Mike) Cale to replace Sandidge as the assistant superintendent for finance.⁸⁵ Cale, Davis' finance officer in Fairfax County, was now reunited with his former boss.

At its July meeting the board developed its priority budget items. Twenty-five items suggested by board members

⁸²Ibid., 24 April 1981, 65.

⁸³Ibid., 22 May 1981, 76.

⁸⁴Ibid., 27 February 1981, 26.

⁸⁵Ibid., 26 March 1981, 50.

were cut to fourteen items, and then the boards's Finance Committee reviewed the list and recommended that seven items be included in its request for inclusion in the addendum budget for 1982-84. Basic aid, basic aid/salary incentive, gifted and talented, vocational education, special education, kindergarten (full funding), and remedial education were prioritized in the order listed. The board approved a budget request of \$2.85 billion, an amount that was \$566 million above the amount recommended by Governor Dalton."

Governor Dalton and the General Assembly again lowered the dollar amount for public education that Dr. Davis and the board of education had sought. The approved budget for the first year of the biennium was \$2.5 billion, a figure \$350 million short of the board's goal but an amount that was \$275 million above Governor Dalton's original target."

Throughout 1981 Dr. Davis made funding for schools and teachers' salaries the priority item and the chief topic in most of his speeches. At the annual conference of division superintendents in April, Davis applauded the new money that was being appropriated for public education, and he emphasized that "a substantial portion of this money will be

"Ibid., 29 July 1981, 112.

"Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1981.

used to increase the salaries of teachers in the public schools throughout the state. You and your school boards are acutely aware of the salary problem; you know only too well that finding funds for increases will require leadership of epic dimensions.""

In October in an address to the Virginia School Board Association's annual conference Davis discussed the state board's efforts to gain increased funding for education. He stressed the low average salary of instructional personnel in Virginia compared to the national average. Further, he noted that in past years the per pupil expenditure required to support the Standards of Quality program had failed to meet actual per pupil costs. He reaffirmed the seven major priorities that he and the board had set for the 1982-84 biennium and urged local school boards and superintendents to lobby with him to achieve these changes."

At other meetings, like the December conference of the Virginia Manufacturers' Association, Davis used his invitation to speak as an opportunity to promote his funding agenda. The key points Dr. Davis made to the manufacturers

"S. John Davis, "Speech to Annual Conference of Division Superintendents," 6 April 1981, Davis' Personal Files, Midlothian, Virginia.

"S. John Davis, "Speech to VASA and VSBA, Annual Conference on Finances," 2 October 1981, Davis' Personal files, Midlothian, Virginia.

included: (1) the local share of the cost of education has been increasing and the state share decreasing for the past ten years; (2) the SOQ cost established by the state has been unrealistic--1980-82 actual \$1,361, established \$1,185; (3) localities have had to make up the difference between the established and the actual costs; (4) Virginia lags behind the national average by almost \$3,000 for classroom teacher salaries; and (5) there is a direct relationship between state SOQ funding and teacher salaries. Davis concluded with a plea for support of the board of education budget request for additional state funds in the 1982-84 biennium.⁹⁰

Governor John N. Dalton's term of office came to a close in January 1982, and the Democratic administration of Charles S. Robb began. Although Dr. Davis and the board of education did not receive everything that they believed was needed in financial backing for K-12 education, they did obtain increases in funding, and he and the state board did establish the priorities that would become the cornerstone of the educational efforts by Governor Charles S. Robb.

⁹⁰S. John Davis, "Speech to the Virginia Manufacturers' Association," 15 December 1981, Davis' Personal files, Midlothian, Virginia.

Educational Initiatives

When Dr. W. Eugene Campbell left the chief administrative position in the department of education after four years at the helm, he noted that he was most proud of one educational initiative that took place during his term. That initiative was the implementation of the first phase of the competency testing of public school children. Under Campbell's leadership Virginia had become the fourth state in the nation to embark upon such testing.⁹¹ A Basic Learning Skills (BLS) Program had also been developed to improve elementary education by increasing mastery in the basic reading and mathematics skill areas for low-achieving students. Otherwise, Campbell's tenure was a cautious, conservative period in which few new educational initiatives were pursued.

Hull Street Research

The Davis era that followed would have a totally different look in educational programming. When Davis left Fairfax County, he did so with a reputation as a superintendent who had been strong in curricular matters. "His ability to broaden the curriculum and develop new

⁹¹John P. Tarpey, "Politics Temporarily Put Aside for Farewell to 'Super Jack,'" The Washington Star, 27 June 1979, A-1.

programs to meet the needs of the community has been instrumental in keeping this one of the best educational systems in the country," said William H. Hoofnagle, former school board chairman and county supervisor.⁹²

The same philosophy and approach came with Davis to Richmond. His colleagues in the department of education saw Davis as a thinker and a doer when it came to educational programs. Callie P. Shingleton, one of his chief instructional staff, noted that "Davis was always thinking of ideas. He wanted to move things forward."⁹³ E. B. Howerton, Jr., another key Davis colleague, said, "Davis was not a sit down and wait superintendent."⁹⁴ Harry L. Smith, Davis' chief public relations officer, stated, "When Jack was at the department, he pushed educational programs on a broad front. Dr. Wilkerson and Dr. Campbell tended to be more cautious than Jack. Davis had the ability to get programs adopted and implemented."⁹⁵ William H. Cochran, the deputy superintendent when Davis took over the DOE, believed that Davis "had a tendency to jump on certain

⁹²Ibid., A-6.

⁹³Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

⁹⁴Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

⁹⁵Smith, interview, 4 February 1994.

bandwagons," especially in instructional areas."⁶ Emmett Shufflebarger, a long-time head of the Radford field office for the department, saw Davis as "an issues-oriented state superintendent who took up new and popular ideas quite easily."⁷

Davis had a thirty minute or so drive into Richmond from his home at Brandermill in Midlothian, Virginia. He often spoke of his "Hull Street research," which consisted of ideas that he had developed as he commuted to and from the office."⁸

Minimum Competency Testing

The first issue that confronted Dr. Davis after his appointment was the minimum competency testing program initiated by Dr. Campbell. Although Dr. Campbell had called such testing "the greatest opportunity available to restore the public's confidence in public education,"⁹ he had been brought to the altar of such testing somewhat reluctantly. The General Assembly had compelled the state superintendent

⁶Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

⁷Emmett G.Shufflebarger, interview with author, Marion, Virginia, 3 March 1993.

⁸Davis, interview, 4 February 1994 and Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

⁹Staff, "Davis Aims to Establish a Performance Promise," Northern Virginia Star, 4 June 1979, B-1.

and the educational establishment in Virginia to acquiesce to the competency testing program. The Virginia Education Association (VEA), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Virginia Association of School Administrators (VASA) had all publically opposed competency testing. Jack W. Gravely, the executive director for the NAACP in the Commonwealth, blasted the testing program and its discriminatory implications for black children.¹⁰⁰ Judy Cox, a VEA board member and a Staunton classroom teacher, listed six concerns that teachers had: (1) the possibility of narrowing the curriculum with the emphasis on basic skills, (2) the potential for teachers "teaching to the test," (3) the weakness inherent in a single test philosophy, (4) the need for the state's curriculum to be revamped to develop a proper sequence for teaching basic skills, (5) the extra paperwork and recordkeeping required, and (6) the professional risk involved in working with low ability or low achieving students.¹⁰¹

Dr. Davis, then Fairfax's superintendent, and his school board censured the competency testing program as the

¹⁰⁰Gary Robertson, "Competence Tests Scored," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 7 August 1979, B-1.

¹⁰¹Judy Cox, "A Teacher's Concerns About VA's Competency Tests," Virginia Journal of Education, November 1979, 15-17.

"tenth grade surprise." Davis criticized "schools that promote students each year, and when they fail the minimum competency test at the end of the ninth grade, hold them back." Instead Davis advocated specifying "skills to be mastered at each grade level and testing all students, starting in the first grade, on their mastery of these specific skills." Davis also insisted on sharing goals set for students with parents so that the school and the home could work together.¹⁰²

Dr. Campbell came under fire for his cautious handling of the high school graduation competency test. The 1978 General Assembly even decided that the board of education was moving too slowly to start the competency program and ordered the board, "steeped in local control traditions," to select statewide tests. The General Assembly also mandated that from 1981 on all students graduating from high school must prove mastery of basic reading and math by passing these tests. When Dr. Campbell and the state board refused to make test scores public, the board of education was sued by the media. The General Assembly then stepped in and ordered a schedule for disclosure of future tests.¹⁰³

¹⁰²Charles Cox, "Davis Aims to Establish a Performance Promise," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 4 June 1979, B-1.

¹⁰³Charles Cox, "State Superintendent Will Retire June 30," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 8 March 1979, A-1.

When Davis became state superintendent, it became his job to continue the implementation of the competency testing program. Using his past critique of the program as a starting point, Davis advocated a different approach. He told a General Assembly subcommittee in late June of 1979 that the state's minimum competency tests did not give enough credibility to a high school diploma. He added that the tests were indeed minimal and did not define what the public expected of a high school graduate. In further testimony to the House Education Subcommittee on Competency Testing, Davis iterated that in the trial tests administered to tenth graders in October 1978 eighty-two percent passed statewide and in Fairfax County ninety-four percent of tenth graders passed. Davis was especially critical of the tests for requiring students and teachers to concentrate on basic subjects most high school students had mastered.¹⁰⁴

The day after his remarks to the House subcommittee Davis appeared before the board of education. He further outlined his approach to competency testing. First, he noted that the state's public schools should promise parents that their children would achieve certain performance levels and then keep the promise. "We should specify specific skills to be mastered at each grade level, skills such as

¹⁰⁴Staff, "Davis Critical of Competency Tests," Northern Virginia Sun, 29 June 1979, 1.

adding three columns of numbers or at a more advanced level, solving equations with one unknown," Davis said, "and share (our goals) with parents on an individual basis." Second, to end surprises of failure in high school, Davis would give competency tests every year at every grade level to let all know who needed remedial help. Third, he would use minimum competency test scores to point out teachers as well as students who were failing. "If tests show up poor instructional techniques, they can help superintendents develop remedial programs for teachers," he said.¹⁰⁵

The state superintendent-to-be was criticized for what some saw as his opposition to competency testing. Davis, realizing the political sensitivity of opposing a legislative mandate, began to stress that he favored the idea but that he would like to make some changes in the way the program was developing. He told influential legislators that "minimum competency testing is a good idea that can be improved." He stressed that basic reading and math tests should be given in every grade and students should be given solid makeup help every year if they were behind. He also noted that the tests as constituted punished students but not schools or school divisions which might not be delivering needed services. Finally, Davis made it clear to

¹⁰⁵Charles Cox, "Pupils' Test Termed Teachers' Test, Too," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 30 June 1979, B-1.

the General Assembly that he believed "the mandated testing program had gotten the attention of school officials."¹⁰⁶

The Standards of Learning Program

Dr. Davis began working with both department of education (DOE) staff and the board of education to develop a proposal for developing statewide instructional objectives, grades K-12, in reading, mathematics, and other subject areas to be established. At the December 1979 board meeting, Dr. Carl Riehm, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, presented for review and approval for planning purposes a proposal for Virginia's Standards of Learning. The proposal included a plan for the development of statewide instructional objectives, K-12; purposes of such a statewide program; the nature of the K-12 program; and a plan of action and timeline for implementation. A complementing criterion-referenced testing program was also discussed. Dr. Davis pointed out that "the staff did not envision a statewide curriculum for public schools, but this would be the floor and many school divisions could go far beyond it." The board unanimously

¹⁰⁶Charles Cox, "More Competence Tests Urged," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 29 June 1979, A-1.

approved the proposal for planning purposes.¹⁰⁷

The Standards of Learning (SOL) Program launched in 1979-80 was billed as a program that would take the best features of the Basic Learning Skills (BLS) Program for the elementary grades and the Graduation Competency Testing (GCT) Program for high school students and expand them to include the skills and knowledge students should acquire from the time they entered school until they graduated.¹⁰⁸

Dr. Callie P. Shingleton, administrative director of general education in the department of education when Dr. Davis became state superintendent, said that the Standards of Learning Program was Dr. Davis' idea, based on the Program of Studies that he and his staff had developed in Fairfax County. Dr. Davis assumed the major responsibility for the development of the program in Richmond and worked with and coordinated the rest of the staff in the project. Dr. Richard L. Boyer came up with the name which in effect added Standards of Learning to the Standards of Quality and Accreditation Standards programs already in place.¹⁰⁹

Dr. Davis wanted to involve many different people in

¹⁰⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 7 December 1979, 169.

¹⁰⁸Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1979-80, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1981, xiv.

¹⁰⁹Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

the development of the SOLs. He especially wanted teachers and the VEA involved. He also tried to have equal distribution from across the state. He sought to include all levels of educators--elementary, secondary, special education, college and university. He asked the VEA to identify teachers to be included in the development phase. However, in a rare oversight he did not include business and industry representatives in the developmental process. The state, for the first time, paid a per diem and brought teachers to a university campus for a two-week long workshop to write objectives.¹¹⁰

The SOL program was built on the BLS program, but the BLS program only provided minimum levels for low achieving youngsters. The SOLs were for all students and were more comprehensive in approach.

In June of 1980 some two hundred educators met at James Madison University (JMU) to help devise the SOLs. Dr. Davis' ability to gain broad support for the development and implementation of the program was exhibited in an editorial in the Richmond Times-Dispatch. The Times-Dispatch editor agreed that "there is a corpus of knowledge" that all public school pupils in Virginia ought to be expected to have mastered at each grade level. The editorial writer believed

¹¹⁰Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

that in the state's tradition of local control of education "there is room for the state to prescribe learning objectives for the state's pupils." Billing the JMU gathering as a "somewhat controversial" teachers' workshop, the editorial argued that the work was "just a logical extension of the statewide Basic Learning Skills for grades 1-6 and the high school graduation competency test." The editorial writer summed up the arguments for and against the new program in the concluding paragraphs:

Despite the predominance of local classroom teachers at Dr. Davis' Harrisonburg session, plus plans to have the proposed learning objectives reviewed by students, teachers, and parents around the state, spokesmen for the VEA have voiced concerns that Dr. Davis is pushing a "statewide curriculum" that state bureaucrats will use to rate teachers, fail students, and make odious comparisons among schools and school divisions.

Local decision making is important. What teachers to hire or fire, how pupils should be promoted or retained ought to remain local decisions and DOE spokesmen say that will remain so.

But it is a legitimate function of the state board, in partnership with the localities, to set forth targets of achievement for pupils, teachers, and schools to shoot at.¹¹¹

As the Standards of Learning objectives were written, staff members took them to the state board, to the state superintendent's advisory council, to key local school division instructional leaders around the state, to lay

¹¹¹"A State Curriculum?" Richmond Times-Dispatch, 27 June 1980, A-8.

groups, to parent-teacher groups, to the various principals' groups, to the school board association, to the teachers' organization, and to many other groups. There was more involvement in SOL development than in the development of any other program. Dr. Davis insisted that the standards be written so that people could understand them and that they be on the proper grade level. When the 1980 General Assembly refused to appropriate the funds requested for SOL program development, Dr. Davis worked with the board of education to shift funds in the department's budget to pay stipends, cover room and board, and pay travel. Dr. Davis spent time on campus; he was present and visible, building the vision, developing the process, and giving the teachers a challenge to the task at hand.¹¹²

Dr. Carl Riehm reported to the board of education at its June 1980 meeting that 180 teachers had attended the SOL workshop at James Madison University and that the target date for implementation of the language arts and mathematics objectives was September 1981.¹¹³ At the December meeting Dr. Callie Shingleton presented a progress report on the SOL program and a plan for review of SOL objectives. The plan included review by educators, the general public, teacher

¹¹²Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

¹¹³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1980," 51, 27 June 1980, 101.

trainers, and representatives from professional and other organizations. The classroom application component would involve the actual use of the objectives by selected classroom teachers in math and language arts. Dr. Shingleton reported that the draft of objectives in math and language arts (K-12) would be sent to educators and local school divisions in January and every teacher of math and language arts would be given an opportunity to respond.¹¹⁴

At the February 1981 board meeting Dr. Davis noted that the Basic Learning Skills and the Standards of Learning testing programs would be combined into one criterion-referenced testing program.¹¹⁵ On May 22, 1981, the board reviewed the SOL objectives for the first time after copies had been distributed to approximately 30,000 teachers, administrators, supervisors, and lay and professional groups.¹¹⁶ On July 29, 1981, the board approved math and language arts objectives, and the SOL program was ready to begin when school resumed in the fall of 1981.¹¹⁷

Trial use of the objectives was implemented in twenty-

¹¹⁴Ibid., 5 December 1980, 174.

¹¹⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1981," 52, 27 February 1981, 20.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 22 May 1981, 78.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 29 July 1981, 135.

five Virginia localities. Some 450 objectives spelling out skills students were expected to master were tried. At the conclusion of the 1981-82 school year objectives for each grade were evaluated for quality and effectiveness. In the summer of 1981 objectives were drafted for social studies, health, and science, and the same review process was started. An SOL assessment component to monitor individual achievement of specific objectives was also planned. Finally, a component for students needing remedial and advanced instruction was added to the program.¹¹⁸

As the Dalton administration came to an end in January 1982, the Standards of Learning Program was well under way. However, it would not be fully completed until the administration of Governor Robb.

Bilingual Education

In the summer and fall of 1980 a major debate erupted over new federal regulations on bilingual education. Federal guidelines were published August 5 to carry out the intent of the Supreme Court's 1974 ruling in Lau v. Nichols and the 1964 Civil Rights Act banning discrimination on account of race, sex, age, or national origin. The new

¹¹⁸Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1980-81, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1982, xii.

regulations required the states and localities to instruct foreign-born children in their native languages if two or more classes had twenty-five such children enrolled. For the two to five years that they received such native language instruction, intensive remedial assistance to make them proficient in English was also mandated.

Dr. Davis, the foreign language supervisory staff in the department of education, and many Virginia educators preferred the English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) approach. In the ESL method specially trained teachers gave all instruction in English. Behind that schema was the idea that the more English was used, the faster children would learn to speak it.¹¹⁹

Helen P. Warriner-Burke, associate director for foreign languages in the department, gave a position statement at the New York hearings in reference to the proposed Lau Regulations on September 9, 1980. Then, on September 17 Dr. Davis went to Chicago to represent Virginia at the public hearing on bilingual education held by the United States Department of Education.

Both Warriner-Burke and Davis emphasized similar points in opposition to the restrictive Lau regulations: (1) The Lau regulations went beyond the court's decision and

¹¹⁹Charles Cox, "Davis Will Fight Bilingual Education at Hearing," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 4 September 1980, A-1.

required bilingual education. The test of the Lau v. Nichols decision clearly permitted other options including teaching English-as-a-second language. (2) There was no conclusive and generally accepted research which indicated bilingual education was superior to any other means of responding to the needs of limited English proficiency students. (3) The bilingual education that would be required was discriminatory circumstantially, because it would be mandated in schools in which twenty-five or more students of one language were enrolled in two consecutive grades and it would not be required for lesser concentrations of foreign-speaking students. (4) Some school districts had voluntarily, and at considerable expense, established ESL centers and brought together students from various grade levels, languages, and schools to teach them English and to help them achieve in school. These school districts usually had small numbers of students speaking any one language. (5) Expenses for materials, personnel, testing, monitoring, reaccessing, and recordkeeping would add as much as \$10,000,000 to public school costs in Virginia.¹²⁰

The advocacy of the bilingual approach was seen as a

¹²⁰S. John Davis, "Statement at Public Hearing by United States Department of Education on Bilingual Education--Proposed Lau Regulations," Chicago, Illinois, 17 September 1980.

"politically inspired courtship of Hispanic and other ethnic voters" by President Jimmy Carter's new department of education.¹²¹ Governor John N. Dalton supported Davis' position and appealed to Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr., Independent-VA, to help in the Senate to defeat the proposed bilingual rules. The House of Representatives voted to squelch them, approving a rider on an appropriations measure prohibiting the United States Department of Education from forcing any locality to teach any language other than English. Dalton urged Byrd to make sure the Senate did the same.¹²² A few months later the Senate concurred.

Teacher Certification

At his first meeting of the board of education after taking office as state superintendent, Dr. Davis recommended that all teachers seeking initial certification be required to take the National Teachers' Examination (NTE) and to submit scores on both the common and speciality sections to the department of education. During the first two years no cut-off score would be established while the staff collected data for research purposes. A recommendation on a passing

¹²¹Cox, "Davis Will Fight Bilingual Education at Hearing," A-1.

¹²²Staff, "Bilingual Foe Wants Byrd Aid," Richmond Times-Dispatch, B-1.

score would be made following a field test analysis.¹²³

One month later at the October meeting the board approved implementation of the NTE without a cut-off score and asked the staff to accelerate the work that needed to be done to put the examination into effect.¹²⁴ Both Dr. Davis and the state board were reacting to the 1979 General Assembly mandate that all entering the teaching profession take a competency test.

In January of 1980 Dr. Callie P. Shingleton presented to the board a plan for the development of requirements for certification of middle school teachers and administrators. This approach would require all newly hired middle school teachers and administrators to hold appropriate endorsements by July of 1986.¹²⁵

New NTE and middle school requirements were only a prelude to a much larger and much more controversial study of teacher certification. The board of education named an Advisory Committee on Teacher Certification and spent

¹²³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 28 September 1979, 133.

¹²⁴Ibid., 11 October 1979, 147.

¹²⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1980," 51, 25 January 1980, 13.

1979-80¹²⁶ and 1980-81 studying changes in the certification requirements with final action planned for December 1981.¹²⁷

By January of 1981 the Advisory Committee on Teacher Certification had a 99-page report ready for the board to review. The advisory committee recommended among other things that "all who teach be graduates of approved [professional education] programs," that a one-year probation period be required for new teachers, and that fifteen semester hours of professional education courses (6 hours in methods, 3 hours in human growth and development, 6 hours in student teaching) be required.

Dr. Davis proposed several modifications to the report. The first change would be to allow liberal arts and other non-teacher college graduates who proved their worth in the classroom to receive a license after taking only three hours of professional education credits. The second recommendation would require a three-year probationary period instead of a one-year period. The state would issue only temporary certificates during that three-year period and would issue

¹²⁶Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1979-80, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1981, xv.

¹²⁷Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1980-81, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1982, xii.

provisional certificates to graduates of colleges other than teacher colleges. These graduates would then be forgiven twelve hours of professional education courses once they proved their teaching skills in the classroom. Dr. Davis did agree with the advisory committee's recommendation to continue to require all who taught below the high school level to be teacher college graduates.¹²⁸

When Dr. Davis proposed his modifications, the teacher colleges "came out swinging." Dean James M. Yankovich of the Education School at the College of William and Mary termed Davis' proposals "patently ridiculous, professionally insulting, and a mockery." Dean Richard M. Brandt of the University of Virginia School of Education found Davis' three-semester hour proposal "absolutely impossible and an insult." Walter Mika, president of the VEA, agreed with Brandt, and both advanced the argument that three hours of methods training were not enough to make a teacher. Mika suggested that Virginia colleges would refuse to teach the new three-hour package--classroom management, diagnosis of problems of the gifted and handicapped, discipline, and the like.¹²⁹

¹²⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1981," 52, 23 January 1981, 3.

¹²⁹Charles Cox, "Teacher Training Reductions Scored," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 18 January 1981, A-1.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch editorially supported Dr. Davis' position that liberal arts plus experience could produce a good teacher. Although "some pedagogues have yowled," the State Board of Education ought to follow the public interest which is "obtaining the best-educated teachers from a wide variety of sources, not the vested interest in the 'methods' approach."¹³⁰

By the end of June 1981 Dr. Davis had more ammunition to fire at the teacher college deans when he chaired a task force on teacher certification for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Dr. Davis gave the task force's report at a meeting in Boca Raton, Florida, and gained publicity back in Virginia for his efforts. The task force was charged with considering the linkage between public schools and higher education and coming up with ways the two levels could cooperate in raising academic standards. About one-half of the task forces' twenty-five recommendations dealt with the colleges' preparation of teachers for the public schools. The primary thrusts of the recommendations were (1) to tighten the process of teacher selection starting with tighter admission standards and ending with performance evaluation of beginning teachers, (2) to test those who would teach and set passing scores

¹³⁰Editorial Staff, "The Liberal Arts Way," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 January 1981, A-8.

high enough not only to weed out the unqualified but also to serve as an incentive for gifted students to enter the profession, (3) to mandate a joint review by each state's higher education council and board of education of the teacher education programs in the college with action to eliminate low-quality or duplicated efforts, and (4) to develop a more flexible approach to licensing new teachers which would enable liberal arts graduates to gain provisional certification as beginning teachers along with education majors. Both would have to demonstrate their teaching skills and mastery of subject matter during a probationary period or take extra work to correct their deficiencies.¹³¹

Another Times-Dispatch editorial agreed with John Dewey's statement that "all other reforms are conditioned upon reform in the quality and character of those who engage in the teaching profession." The editorial writer believed that the task force of the SREB, headed by S. John Davis followed Dewey's principle.¹³²

After holding more public hearings in April, the board

¹³¹S. John Davis, "Task Force Report on Teacher Certification," Southern Regional Education Board, Boca Raton, Florida, 29 June 1981, 1, Davis' Personal Papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

¹³²Editorial, "Quality in Teaching." Richmond Times-Dispatch, 2 July 1981, B-8.

of education decided that it needed the re-edited advisory committee recommendations and Dr. Davis' proposals as quickly as possible. Following additional study, the board projected a vote on the revised teacher certification standards at its December meeting with the effective date of the changes to be July 1, 1982.¹³³

Tough behind-the-scenes lobbying by teacher training colleges and key education interest groups weakened board support for Dr. Davis' proposals. At its November 19 meeting the board reviewed the certification standards one final time before its December decision. At that time the board refused to ask for the \$1 million that the department of education needed to launch Davis' original plan. Davis then announced that he could count and he was dropping his original plan.¹³⁴

The week before the December board meeting the education writer for the Times-Dispatch wrote that "teacher college faculties backed by VEA members who are graduates of the colleges appeared to have dealt Dr. Davis a stinging slap in the face in the worst defeat of his twenty-four months as state superintendent." He further elaborated:

If the board votes "no," the state could continue

¹³³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1981," 52, 23 January 1981, 3.

¹³⁴Ibid, 19 November 1981, 164.

under what Davis regards as outdated, defective, and toothless regulations that in effect encourage the board to delegate its statutory authority over quality control of the teaching profession to the teacher colleges. If the board votes no, there is also a chance that legislators like Delegate George W. Grayson, D-Williamsburg, will back legislation to require what the board may fail to do.¹³⁵

At its December 1981 meeting the board voted on the 83-page, 28,000 word volume of licensing regulations that had been debated for twenty-nine months, had gone through eighteen drafts, had survived thirty-eight meetings of the board's Advisory Committee on Teacher Certification, and had been the bone-of-contention in half a dozen public hearings.¹³⁶

After discussion on December 11, the board defeated by a five-to-four count Henry W. Tullochs' motion to adopt the teacher certification revision and to approve the concept of the superintendent's original provisional certificate proposal. Then Dr. Mark Fravel, an education professor at Old Dominion University, made a motion seconded by Margaret S. Marston that the revised edition of the certification standards advanced by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Certification be approved. Mr. Tulloch made a substitute motion that the board approve provisional certification on a

¹³⁵Charles Cox, "Tough New Teacher-Training Plan in Dustbin?" Richmond Times-Dispatch, 7 December 1981, B-1.

¹³⁶Ibid.

temporary basis with further consideration after recommendation on methods of administration by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Certification. The substitute motion was defeated by a four-to-five vote. Another substitute motion by Mr. Watkins to defer action on the provisional certification until February and to have the department of education make a thorough study of the matter also lost by the same four-to-five vote. A vote then was taken on the original motion by Dr. Fravel that the November 19 revised edition of the certification standards be approved. The approval was five-to-four (Fravel, Marston, Robinson, Pringle, and Montgomery--ayes; White, Watkins, James, and Tulloch--nos).¹³⁷

The Times-Dispatch reported the state board's decision the next day and noted that "for S. John Davis it was a professional humiliation without parallel in the modern annals of the state policy board.... Whether the board's repudiation of the professional judgment of Dr. Davis ends his usefulness as state superintendent is a question asked openly by head-shaking board members and other state officials yesterday."¹³⁸

¹³⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1981," 52, 11 December 1981, 180.

¹³⁸Charles Cox, "Education Board Kills Temporary License Plan," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 12 December 1981, A-1.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch kept the matter alive with several articles the remainder of December. An editorial on December 15 urged the General Assembly to overturn the teacher certification regulations just passed "which, with the defeat of Davis' bold plan, would have quality control in hands of a teacher-training monopoly."¹³⁹

Influential Virginians like historian Virginius S. Dabney wrote that "Virginia seems destined to become an educational slum unless the General Assembly takes matters in hand and overrides the stupid and shortsighted 5-to-4 decision of the Board of Education rejecting State Superintendent S. John Davis' courageous and forward-looking plan for screening out incompetent public school teachers." Dabney also argued that the General Assembly needed to take the matter out of the hands of the board of education.¹⁴⁰

J. Harvie Wilkerson, Jr., retired board chairman of United Virginia Bank and a former member of the Richmond City School Board and the State Council of Higher Education, was quoted, "I am saddened that these colleges have howled in wrath at eminently reasonable proposals for reforming teacher education when they should have been advocating

¹³⁹Editorial Staff, "Not a Dead Issue," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 15 December 1981, A-6.

¹⁴⁰Virginius S. Dabney, "Letter to the Editor in Voice of the People," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 19 December 1981, A-8.

reform themselves."¹⁴¹

On December 20 the paper reported that recent teacher licensing battles had left the board of education far more divided than anyone could recall. It further iterated that Governor-elect Charles S. Robb and the General Assembly each had the power to intervene and write into law the plan rejected by a five-to-four vote on December 11.

"Interestingly," the paper noted, "on January 16, 1982, Charles S. Robb becomes governor; thirteen days later the board is slated to elect its new chairman and by coincidence that same day, January 29, two of the nine board members' terms expire." Both board members had been appointed by Governor John N. Dalton. Henry Tulloch was the leader of the minority and Dr. Woodrow Robinson advocated the majority position. The Times-Dispatch found it significant that the governor-elect owed the VEA a political debt for its support in his campaign. Robb had the choice of appointing people who would vote for the Davis plan or doing as his VEA friends wanted and appoint new members to defeat the Davis plan. Also, the VEA wanted more state money for teacher salary raises. "Governor Robb might tell the VEA--more pay

¹⁴¹Charles Cox, "Tough New Teacher-Training Plan in Dustbin?" Richmond Times-Dispatch, 7 December 1981, B-1.

but teaching licensure."¹⁴²

Since the 1980 General Assembly had asked--Are teacher college admission standards too low? Are too many of their graduates unqualified to teach?--many believed that the board of education was afraid that it would be seen as answering both of these questions in the affirmative if it endorsed Davis' licensing approach. The same observers believed that legislators would act if the new governor failed to take the lead in teacher certification.¹⁴³

Special Education

S. John Davis took office as state superintendent with a reputation as a pro-special education administrator from his Fairfax years. Early in his tenure Dr. Davis promised four things for special education: (1) to urge the board of education to increase payments to school districts that joined together to provide special centers for the handicapped to a 60-40 ratio instead of the reverse which was in effect if a district sent a child to a private school, (2) to push for vocational education for the handicapped, (3) to fight federal regulations that had

¹⁴²Charles Cox, "Teacher Licensing Issue Won't Go Away," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 20 December 1981, B-1.

¹⁴³Charles Cox, "Tough New Teacher Training Plan in Dustbin?" Richmond Times-Dispatch, 7 December 1981, B-4.

burdened teachers with paperwork, and (4) to increase sensitivity to handicapped pupils through inservice training for school personnel.¹⁴⁴

In a January address to the Virginia Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, Dr. Davis spoke of numerous needs in the teaching of learning disabled (LD) students. His list of suggestions included the following: (1) more trained LD teachers, especially at the secondary level; (2) LD programs developed to ensure, as far as possible, success for students; (3) certification requirements for teachers strengthened to make sure all teachers have experience in working with special students; (4) more regional programs for handicapped LD children; (5) better communication between parents and the school, LD teachers and vocational teachers, vocational teachers and vocational rehabilitation services; (6) better and more inservice training for parents, teachers, and administrators; (7) better physical facilities for many LD classes; and (8) more adaptive courses to serve the needs of LD students in physical education and typing. New directions in Virginia would include more accountability for special education and expanded support services so that more handicapped students could be educated in regular

¹⁴⁴Staff, "Davis Proud of Work to Aid Handicapped," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 4 November 1979, D-7.

classrooms.¹⁴⁵

Davis also strongly supported giving greater emphasis in the 1980s to refining procedural requirements for handicapped children. He took steps to reorganize the DOE so that programs serving exceptional children could be given proper attention. The Division of Special Education was divided into two divisions--one responsible for programs and services and the other for administration and finance. In developing the SOLs and in future funding needs, programs for the handicapped were kept in mind by the Davis administration.¹⁴⁶

Dr. Davis' first meeting with the state board saw him request that 60/40 funding--residential private/residential public--be reviewed, that the disparity between residential funding for local school residential situations and public school situations be studied, and that a review be made of the insufficient number of personnel trained in monitoring special education as required by federal law.¹⁴⁷ Changes

¹⁴⁵S. John Davis, "Address to the Executive Board of Virginia Association for Children with Learning Disabilities," 10 January 1981, in Davis' private papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

¹⁴⁶S. John Davis, "Speech at Annual Forum of Virginia's Division for Children," 30 October 1980, in Davis' private papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

¹⁴⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 28 September 1979, 125.

were then made as Dr. Davis had advocated.

Gifted Education

Dr. Davis gave specific emphasis to the education of gifted children in his first years in office. He was particularly concerned about the disparity among the local school divisions in interpreting what constituted differentiated instruction for exceptional students. Some school divisions did not group gifted and talented students separately, and service was limited to occasional supplemental activities either in regular classrooms or after school. At the secondary level some divisions offered only the opportunity to enroll in advanced classes, which was the same opportunity afforded any other student with good grades. His goal was to have well-organized programs using special teachers, special materials, extensive community resources, and lay persons.¹⁴⁸

For the 1980-82 biennium Dr. Davis and the state board sought and the General Assembly appropriated a 52 percent increase in funding for gifted and talented programs over the previous biennium. Also, approximately \$600,000 was

¹⁴⁸S. John Davis, "Speech at Annual Forum, Virginia Division for Children," 30 October 1980; in Davis' private papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

appropriated for the Governor's School for the Gifted.¹⁴⁹

Dr. Davis supported the Governor's School concept, and in the years following the Dalton administration greater emphasis and expansion would take place.

The Southern Regional Education Board

S. John Davis was active in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) as was indicated previously in his chairing of the task force on teacher certification. In June 1981 the SREB Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools issued a report with twenty-five recommendations to improve the quality of education in the southern region.

Dr. Davis recommended to the Virginia Board of Education and to the State Council of Higher Education action on six major areas from this SREB report. The six proposals were: (1) the development of a regional or a state proficiency test to screen acceptance into teacher preparation programs; (2) the addition of incentives such as salary supplements, scholarships and loans, twelve month contracts, and business and industry inducements to attract mathematics and science teachers; (3) the necessity to review graduation requirements for high schools and to

¹⁴⁹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1981-82, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1983, xi.

establish more rigorous course requirements and higher test scores for college and university admissions; (4) the need to increase compensation for cooperating teachers and to provide better training for these teachers; (5) the development of more effective school leaders by better defining skills needed by principals; and (6) the improvement of continuing education for teachers through staff development and recertification programs that related to the teacher's instructional assignment.¹⁵⁰

Dr. Davis worked to obtain these recommendations in several ways during the Dalton administration and later in the Robb years. His proposals for teacher certification discussed earlier in this study included several of these SREB recommendations, and changes in the high school and college curriculum would be promulgated early in the Robb administration.

The recommendation that dealt with developing effective school leaders went into effect in 1981. A pilot institute for principals during the summer of 1981 with the theme "Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness" was held. The goals and objectives set were for increasing understanding of issues regarding effective supervision and evaluation of teachers,

¹⁵⁰Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1981-82, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1983, xiii.

improved methods of classroom observation, more experience in analyzing teacher behavior in the classroom, and increased skill in conducting conferences with teachers. The final goal was for participants to apply workshop concepts upon their return to their home schools. A comprehensive plan for leadership training for principals and assistant principals went to the board of education for approval in April 1982.¹⁵¹

Standards of Quality

The Standards of Quality for improving instruction in Virginia had been mandated during Dr. Woodrow Wilkerson's superintendency. It was the responsibility of the board of education to recommend and the General Assembly to approve changes, deletions, and additions in the standards. Two major initiatives were approved for the 1980-82 biennium. The first, which Dr. Davis had helped develop, was a requirement for remedial programs in school divisions with students achieving below grade level in the state testing program. The second change established a pupil-teacher ratio for kindergarten through grade six to replace the

¹⁵¹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1980-81, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1982, xii.

class-size requirement for kindergarten through grade three.¹⁵²

For the 1982-84 biennium, with one major exception, the standards proposed generally updated previous standards. Standard 1, which dealt with basic skills, was revised to add provisions for a standard diploma for students who completed all requirements for graduation from high school; a special diploma for handicapped students; and, for the first time, a certificate for students who completed a prescribed course of study as defined by a local school board.¹⁵³

Accountability

"Accountability, the theme of the seventies in public education" were the opening words of S. John Davis' doctoral dissertation at American University in 1971.¹⁵⁴ As superintendent of the Fairfax County Public Schools during the 1970s, Dr. Davis stressed accountability in financial

¹⁵²Staff, "New Budget, Revised Standards of Quality Become Effective for Public Schools July 1," Public Education in Virginia, 16, no. 1 (Spring 1980), 5.

¹⁵³Staff, "Board Seeks Big Boost in Funds for Basic Aid, Teachers' Salaries," Public Education in Virginia, 17 no. 2 (Summer 1981), 2.

¹⁵⁴Davis, Planning-Programming-Budgeting Systems: A New Horizon in Public School Financial Management, 1.

and instructional matters. During the same decade other educational and governmental leaders across Virginia were placing a similar emphasis on accountability. In the spring of 1974 State Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson wrote that the responsibility for achieving accountability must be shared by the home, pupils, all public school personnel, local boards, the state board, and the General Assembly. He went on to say that "the essential elements in this accountability program for Virginia's public schools are these: quality standards, broad educational goals, specific and measurable objectives, workable strategies, and systematic reporting and dissemination."¹⁵⁵

Dr. Wilkerson's successor and Dr. Davis' predecessor, Dr. W. E. Campbell, added to Wilkerson's definition of accountability when he retired in 1979 after four years at the helm of Virginia's K-12 public education system. In his reflections on education written when he left office, Dr. Campbell stated, "If public education is to be acceptable to a society with a decreasing proportion of school-aged children, delivery of instruction must be cost

¹⁵⁵Woodrow W. Wilkerson, "Accountability in Public Education," Public Education in Virginia, 10 (Spring 1974), 3.

effective."¹⁵⁶

S. John Davis' first comments after the announcement of his appointment as superintendent of public instruction reiterated his belief in fiscal and instructional accountability and echoed Wilkerson's and Campbell's thoughts.¹⁵⁷ However, Dr. Davis would bring the search for accountability to new heights in the 1980s as he promulgated new ways to expand the state's concept of accountability.

An Interview Question

The search committee that Governor John N. Dalton appointed to help him in the selection of a new state superintendent to succeed Dr. Campbell agreed that accountability was an important factor in the selection of a new superintendent for Virginia. The seventh interview question prepared for the candidates to be interviewed by the committee was "How do you feel about tenure and accountability?"¹⁵⁸ Although the replies of the finalists on the tenure and accountability issues were not recorded

¹⁵⁶W. E. Campbell, "Reflection on Public Education," Public Education in Virginia, 15 no. 1 (Spring 1979), 1.

¹⁵⁷Jack Chamberlain, "Educator: New Schools' Chief Favors Leadership, NOT Control," Roanoke Times and World News, 10 June 1979, B-1.

¹⁵⁸John N. Dalton, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, Undated News Release, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

in the committee's minutes, it is reasonable to assume that Davis' answer was acceptable since he became a finalist and then the appointee.

A Mission to Monitor

Insight into S. John Davis' concept of accountability can be gleaned from his first meeting with the board of education after he became superintendent of public instruction. At its regular monthly meeting in September 1979, Dr. Davis presented a proposed mission statement for the state board which began with the words "to ensure that children in Virginia receive an education appropriate to their individual needs...." The statement then gave several broad responsibilities which included establishing the Standards of Quality and exercising "general supervision" of the public school system, providing leadership in determining what is needed and how it is to be attained, involving citizens and school divisions in generating policies and programs necessary to meet its education commitment.

Then, Dr. Davis wrote that "through the Department of Education the Board of Education will monitor local compliance with educational and legislative mandates." Board members discussed the statement and concern was expressed over the choice of the word "monitor." No

substitute word could be agreed upon, and the matter was left with Dr. Davis for study.¹⁵⁹

At the next board meeting Dr. Davis gave three alternatives to the word monitor--"assess, determine, or work with local school divisions to achieve." Dr. Davis recommended "assess" if a word other than "monitor" were to be used. Dr. Mark Fravel reported that the sub-committee recommended that "monitor" be retained. The board then approved the statement of mission with "monitor" as the word choice as Dr. Davis had originally proposed.¹⁶⁰

Dr. Davis' elevation of the word monitor to the mission statement of the board of education was an indication of how seriously he believed in accountability and foreshadowed the increased use of compliance monitoring by the state in his administration.

The Administrative Review Process

The precursor of a full fledged monitoring or auditing program for the department of education was approved in 1973 by the State Board of Education. The Program Audit Service was centered in the Federal Programs Office, and its

¹⁵⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 28 September 1979, 134.

¹⁶⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 11 October 1979, 149.

objective was to assist "school divisions with program accountability as a means of providing quality education."¹⁶¹ Personnel selected for the nucleus of the Program Audit Service were experienced in monitoring and evaluating projects conducted under provisions of Title I and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and were organized as a separate unit under the special assistant for federal programs.

Although a more ambitious team approach to program auditing was visualized, personnel limitations within the department prevented implementation of a broad program in 1973. The audits required too much additional time and work from people already employed fulltime. As a result, the decision was made that one individual from the Program Audit Service would be responsible for evaluation; adherence to guidelines; compliance with program plans, goals, and objectives; instructional methods and procedures; and collecting evaluation data. The revised audit program required on-site visits lasting three-to-nine days, depending upon the size of the school division.

The audit procedure provided for school divisions to submit, ahead of the on-site visit, program documentation,

¹⁶¹Robert W. Foster, Jr., "The Federal Program Audit Service: A Two-Year Perspective," Public Education in Virginia, 11 no. 3 (Fall 1975), 17.

related correspondence, and financial data. A review of this material was completed before the visit. During the visit itself various interviews were conducted. After department coordination of the information acquired during the audit, a written report was made of the findings and the recommendations of the auditor based on the state and federal guidelines which applied to the program. Following activities included an analysis of the reply of the division superintendent to the findings and recommendations made in the report, determination of staff actions to be taken to implement the recommendations, and any other actions required by the audit service as a result of the audit.

In the first two years of the program audit seventy-five school divisions were selected at random for visits. Nine hundred nineteen recommendations for change or commendations were recorded. Most of the recommendations were for changes in administration and property management.

Robert W. Foster, Jr., a supervisor in the Federal Programs Monitoring and Auditing Service, noted the importance of this type of accountability to the administration of federal programs in Virginia. He also believed that adult, special, and vocational education programs could benefit from the Programs Audit Service.¹⁶²

¹⁶²Ibid., 17-19.

Dr. William H. Cochran, deputy superintendent, and Dr. Richard L. Boyer, assistant superintendent for program development, eventually agreed with Mr. Foster and presented a plan for expanding the program audit beyond the federal programs bailiwick to Dr. W. E. Campbell in 1978.¹⁶³ With Campbell's blessing and the board of education's approval, an Administrative Review Service was established in January 1979 to bring together on-site monitoring activities formerly conducted by federally related services in the DOE and other such monitoring in one service area.¹⁶⁴

S. Barry Morris, who had worked with Jack Davis in Fairfax County, had taken early retirement under a Fairfax early retirement plan. He let it be known that he would be interested in working a few more years at the state level. Dr. Cochran and Dr. Boyer went to Dr. Campbell again and recommended that Morris be hired as the staff person to develop the new Administrative Review Service. Dr. Campbell acquiesced and Morris came to Richmond to expand the program. The original intent for the expanded audit was "to help local superintendents by showing them that they were not meeting this regulation or that one. It was not meant

¹⁶³Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹⁶⁴Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1978-79, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1980, 22.

to be as evaluative as it later became.¹⁶⁵

The Administrative Review Service that Barry Morris developed added to the monitoring activities formerly conducted by federally related services in the DOE. On-site reviews were initiated for local performance related to the Standards of Quality, state accreditation of public schools, and regulations of the board of education. Other program areas monitored included special education, vocational education, adult basic education, school food services, Title I, Title IV-B, and Title IV-C.

Besides providing verification of compliance with state and federal mandates, the review procedure was designed to give the division superintendent an independent view of local programs and to assist the school division in delivering required services. Teams of viewers representing general education and special areas of public education visited a school division, usually for four days, and interviewed administrators, leaders of community organizations, and school staff members; observed schools and classroom instruction; reviewed official records and student folders; and conducted surveys of parents, teachers, and students. At the conclusion of the visit, information

¹⁶⁵Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

obtained was reviewed with the school division staff.¹⁶⁶

The review procedure was not intended to be an inspection process; instead it was "designed and conducted as a joint effort with local school division personnel to identify compliance issues and to deal with program requirements in a constructive and realistic manner."¹⁶⁷

During the 1979-80 school year full reviews were completed in thirty-five school divisions, and special education reviews, which were on a different rotation schedule, were completed in fifty-one divisions.¹⁶⁸ In 1980-81 review teams visited twenty-nine school divisions to verify compliance in the various state program areas. Reviews of special education and Title I programs in sixteen additional school divisions were also conducted. Responses were received from 12,931 parents, 9,458 students, and 3,142 teachers in surveys to determine how they felt about the success of schools in implementing the Standards of

¹⁶⁶Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1978-79, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1980, 22-23.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 23.

¹⁶⁸Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1979-80, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1981, 23.

Quality.¹⁶⁹ In 1981-82 review teams visited twenty-six more school divisions to verify SOQ compliance and to monitor federally-funded programs. Reviews of special education and Title I programs were conducted in twenty-two additional school divisions. Responses from 21,973 parents, 2,524 students, and 4,918 teachers were obtained.¹⁷⁰

In the first three years of the service, on-site reviews were held in ninety of the state's one hundred thirty school divisions. Barry Morris brought from Fairfax County to the state significant aspects of Dr. Davis' Program Audit of Administration and Instruction and added these elements to the procedures developed by the Federal Programs Monitoring and Auditing Service. The idea of the surveys of parents, students, and teachers had been developed by Morris and his staff in Fairfax County. Accountability through monitoring and auditing had begun to expand in Richmond in January 1979, seven months before S. John Davis became superintendent of public instruction. Under his leadership the Administrative Review Process would expand in concept and implementation, and its regulatory

¹⁶⁹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1980-81, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1982, 29.

¹⁷⁰Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1981-82, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1983, 28.

features would become more prominent.

Davis on Accountability

Throughout the Dalton years Dr. Davis emphasized accountability in his public utterances. A study of his speeches during this era shows that seldom did he fail to stress accountability, or as he usually phrased it, "the demand for increased accountability in public education."¹⁷¹

A detailed response was made by Davis to the increased demand for accountability in a speech before an important leadership group of the Richmond metropolitan area in November 1980. Dr. Davis stated that "the only new thing about the concept of accountability is the current emphasis being placed upon it. Today old questions about the quality of instruction and the use of educational dollars are being asked with a new intensity." He reiterated his thesis that "if we are to be held accountable for quality education, we in Virginia need to do certain things."¹⁷² He then outlined what needed to be done and what had been done to

¹⁷¹S. John Davis, Untitled article prepared for Thought Patterns, the publication of the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 22 August 1980; in Davis' personal papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

¹⁷²S. John Davis, "Speech to Leadership Metro," Richmond, Virginia, 5 November 1980.

achieve the accountability everyone was demanding.

First, he argued, Virginia must recruit and retain teachers and administrators of the highest caliber. To attract such personnel, adequate and competitive salaries must be offered. "Virginia," he went on, "has slipped from thirtieth place among the states in average teacher pay in 1978-79 to thirty-second in estimated salaries for 1979-80 despite an estimated increase of \$737 in the average salary over the two-year period." He further argued that "it is the effectiveness of the teachers that determines in great measure the quality of instruction and the degree of learning in the classroom." Therefore, the board of education has agreed to "my recommendations on salaries to the General Assembly."¹⁷³

Second, he emphasized the need to spell out the results of Virginia's instructional programs--results defined in terms of specific student achievement in kindergarten through grade twelve. The newly initiated "Standards of Learning Program that takes the best of BLS in elementary grades and graduation competency in high school grades and links and expands them to include all grade levels" will do just that he insisted.

Third, he emphasized changes needed in certification

¹⁷³Ibid.

requirements for administrative, supervisory, and teaching personnel employed in public schools. In particular, he focused on the need for specific subject endorsements that reflected specific teacher competencies and the need to expand requirements in some subject endorsement fields.¹⁷⁴

The State Testing Program

Another important accountability indicator was the state testing program. During Dr. Davis' first two and a half years in office there were five components of the program: developing the basic learning skills monitoring tests and the minimum competency tests for graduation, planning for the Standards of Learning Program, continuing the implementation of the long-range plan for the state testing program, assisting divisions in making better use of test results, and interpreting test results to educators and the public.

By the end of the Dalton administration the state testing program required educational ability and achievement testing at grades 4, 8, and 11. The Science Research Associates (SRA) Achievement Series, 1978 edition, was used for the first time in 1981-82. A previous edition of the SRA test was used in 1979-80 and 1980-81.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

Table 7 shows the SRA test results in mean ability and achievement score percentiles for 1978-79 through 1981-82. Because the percentile ranks from the new test were based on norms different from those reported for previous years, an adjustment of the earlier percentiles has been made; therefore, the percentiles reported for 1978-79 through 1980-81 were estimates of how students in Virginia would have scored had they taken the 1978 edition of the test in those years.¹⁷⁵

Results of the state testing program show little of significance during the first years of Davis' administration. His new programs, particularly the Standards of Learning Program, were not fully implemented, and the change in test norms made the results difficult to compare. The 71,300 students who took the grade 4 SRA in 1981-82 did score better than students in the three years previous in mathematics and language arts and better in reading than all groups except the 1980-81 students. Students in 1981-82 also scored higher than their ability in mathematics and language arts, but not in reading.

At the eighth grade level the 77,200 students who took

¹⁷⁵Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1981-82, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1983, 33.

Table 7

Percentile Ranks of Mean Ability and Achievement Scores for All Students in the State Testing Program 1978-79 Through 1981-82

Grade	Test	1978-79a	1979-80a	1980-81a	1981-82
4	Educational Ability	b	b	b	51
	Achievement:				
	Reading	44	49	51	49
	Mathematics	46	49	50	53
	Language Arts	37	39	42	53
8	Educational Ability	b	b	b	55
	Achievement:				
	Reading	39	41	44	51
	Mathematics	47	50	54	64
	Language Arts	44	46	49	53
11	Educational Ability	b	b	b	55
	Achievement:				
	Reading	49	52	52	52
	Mathematics	50	52	52	58
	Language Arts	49	51	53	53

a Percentile ranks for these years have been adjusted to the 1978 norms.

b Adjusted percentile ranks for educational ability are not available.

Note: From Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, nos. 14 through 17, 1978-79 through 1981-82.

the test in 1981-82 scored significantly better than their counterparts the previous three years in all three achievement areas. They also scored higher than their ability level in mathematics and language arts but not in reading. Eleventh graders tested in 1981-82, 65,600 in number, scored the same or better in 1981-82 than they did in 1978-79, 1979-80, and 1980-81 in reading and language arts and higher in mathematics than they did in any of the three previous years. The eleventh grade students had achievement scores higher than ability scores in mathematics but not in reading and language arts.

Consistent gains were made in mathematics at all three grade levels. Reading and language arts gains were more inconsistent. With the SOL program scheduled for implementation during the 1982-83 school year, Dr. Davis' initiatives had yet to have any real influence on test scores.

Management

Dr. W. E. Campbell, Jack Davis' immediate predecessor as state superintendent, summarized the legacy of his four years in office by stating that he was most proud of two accomplishments: (1) the implementation of the first phase of the high school graduation competency testing program and (2) the reorganization of the department of education.

Described as "one of the most extensive reorganizations in the history of the Department of Education," the revisions in the structure of the department were the product of a lengthy study by Dr. Campbell and department personnel.¹⁷⁶ Campbell's predecessor Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson had allowed several positions to remain empty during his last year in office and had worked shorthanded so Dr. Campbell had some leeway in reorganization.¹⁷⁷

When S. John Davis became superintendent of public instruction, he had a reorganized department to manage and very few vacancies to fill. Davis decided that he would take some time to study the organizational structure and department personnel. Therefore, to the surprise of some observers, the new state superintendent made no immediate changes in organization of staff.¹⁷⁸

Department Organization

The department of education (DOE) that Dr. Davis inherited was structured on organizational theories and concepts that matched the purpose of the organization at that time. The department in the late 1970s and early 1980s

¹⁷⁶Staff, "Department of Education is Reorganized," Public Education in Virginia, 13 no. 3 (Fall 1977), 20.

¹⁷⁷Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹⁷⁸Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

was organized to provide services to local school divisions. In particular, it was set up to provide a great deal of technical assistance to localities; i.e., supervisors in the department worked with local home economics teachers, provided reading assistance for classroom reading teachers, or gave testing and evaluation help to division coordinators of testing as needed.¹⁷⁹

The reorganization in 1977 had five major objectives: (1) to provide more equitable distribution of responsibilities to assistant superintendents, (2) to bring together similar functions under the appropriate service, (3) to delineate more clearly the responsibilities of each service, (4) to bring the department more in line with the kindergarten through grade 12 concept of instruction, and (5) to place services such as evaluation and assessment which were directly concerned with accountability outside the immediate area in which the service was formed.¹⁸⁰

Under the superintendent of public instruction there were a deputy superintendent of public instruction and four assistant superintendents. The responsibilities of the assistant superintendents were divided into program

¹⁷⁹Joseph A. Spagnolo, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 7 January 1994.

¹⁸⁰Staff, "Department of Education Is Reorganized," Public Education in Virginia, 13 no. 3 (Fall 1977), 20.

development, administrative field services, curriculum and instruction, and administration and finance. Three new administrative directors were added to report to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The administrative directors were assigned to general education, vocational education, and instructional support services.

Figure 2 is an organizational chart of the Virginia Department of Education in 1979 when S. John Davis became state superintendent. This organizational framework remained in place throughout the Dalton and Robb years, and then Dr. Davis made minor organizational changes during the Baliles years.

Department Personnel

S. John Davis not only inherited the organization of the department of education, but he also acquired the holdover staff members who had been hired by Dr. Wilkerson and Dr. Campbell. Dr. William H. Cochran, the deputy superintendent and a candidate for the top job in both 1975 and 1979, had been brought to the department from the Radford City division superintendency by Dr. Wilkerson.¹⁸¹ Three of the four assistant superintendents had been

¹⁸¹Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
1979 - 1980**

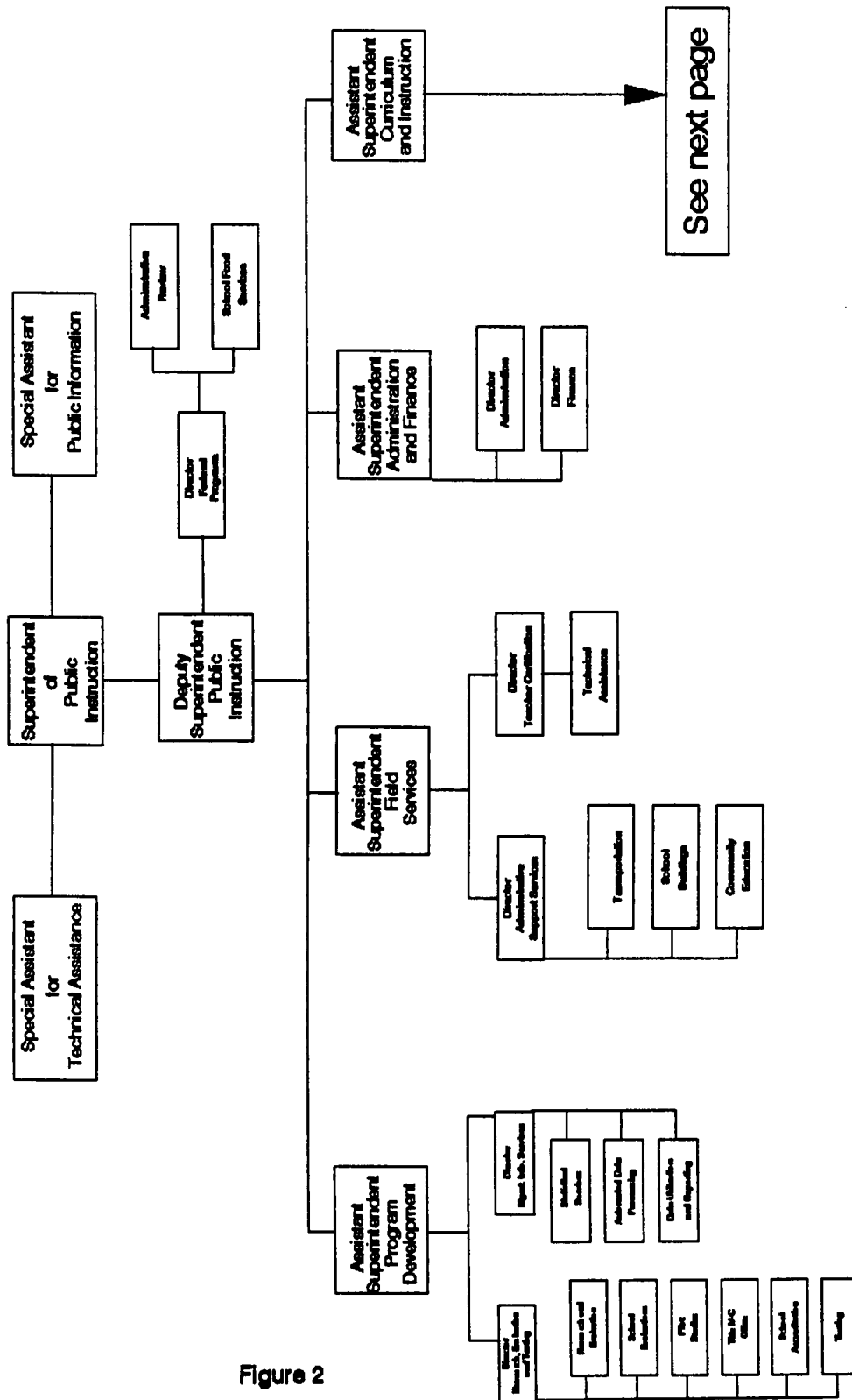


Figure 2

ORGANIZATION OF THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 1979 - 1980 (CONTINUED)

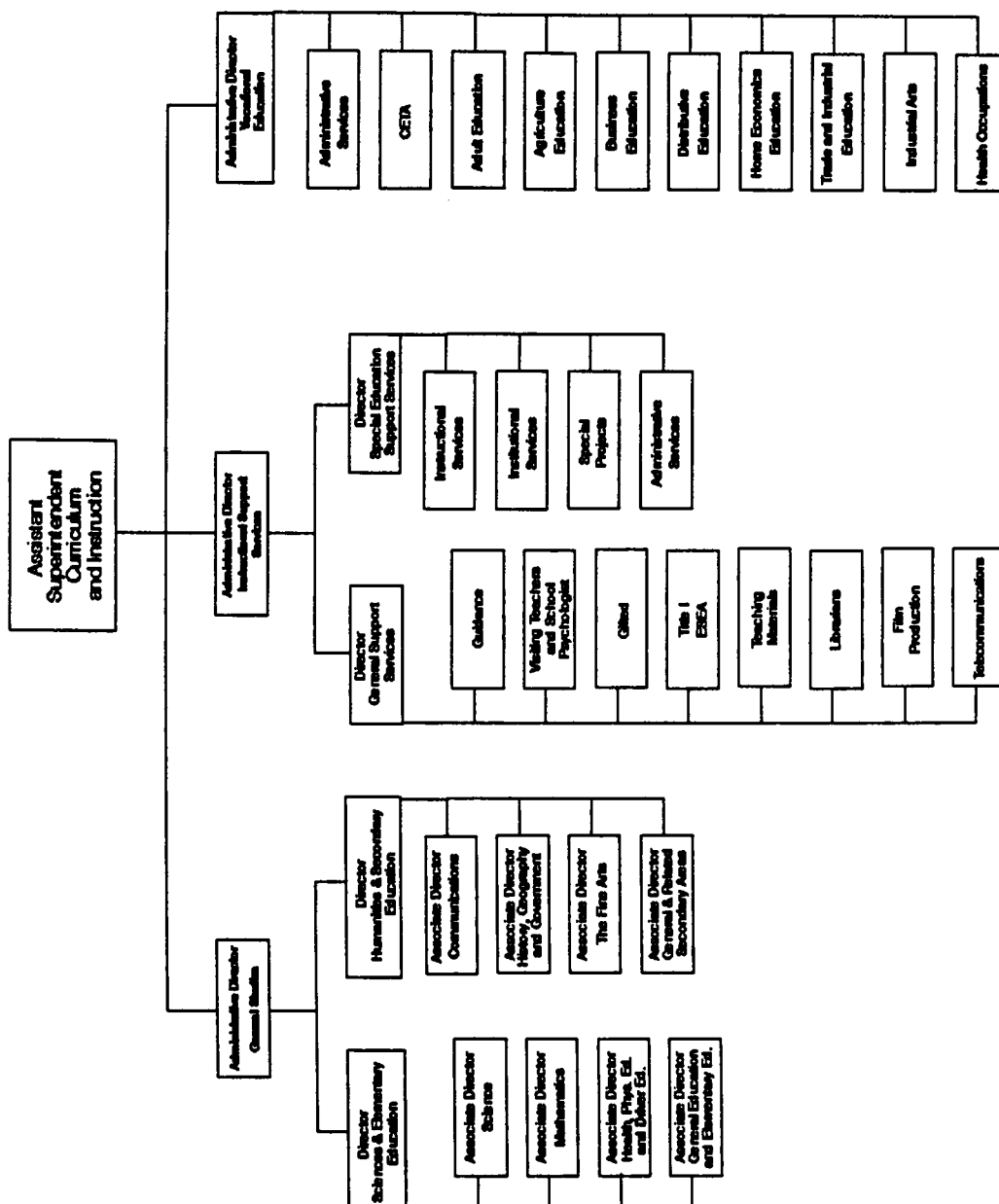


Figure 2: Cont'd

recruited for the department by Dr. Campbell in 1975. Dr. Richard L. Boyer, formerly the special assistant to the superintendent of schools in Henrico County, became the assistant superintendent for program development. Dr. Everett B. Howerton, Jr., the associate executive secretary of the Virginia School Boards Association, became assistant superintendent for administrative field services. Dr. Carl L. Riehm, the associate superintendent for instruction in Prince William County, took over as assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. The fourth assistant superintendent, F. Brent Sandidge, had responsibility for administration and finance, and like Dr. Callie P. Shingleton and Dr. Melvin H. Garner, administrative directors, was a holdover from the Wilkerson era. The third administrative director, N. Grant Tubbs, division superintendent in Washington County, was brought to DOE by Dr. Campbell.¹⁸²

When Dr. Davis took control of the department, he talked to all of the top staff about their respective assignments. Many DOE personnel and other educators who worked with the department had thought that Davis would make wholesale changes and bring new people in from Northern

¹⁸²Staff, "Three Assistant Superintendents, Music Supervisor Are Appointed," Public Education in Virginia, 11 no. 2 (Summer 1975), 21.

Virginia.¹⁸³ Dr. Davis, however, was relatively satisfied with the quality of his staff and changes were made more gradually and more subtly than had been expected.¹⁸⁴

Early in 1981 F. Brent Sandidge announced that he was resigning as assistant superintendent for finance to become division superintendent of the City of Manassas. In the weeks preceding his resignation, Sandidge had suggested to colleagues in the department that his relationship with Dr. Davis had become strained. Sandidge believed that subtle pressure was being applied to encourage him to leave his position. When Myron E. (Mike) Cale was hired by Dr. Davis to replace Dr. Sandidge, department insiders believed that the Northern Virginia migration to Richmond had begun.¹⁸⁵

At the March 1981 board meeting Dr. Davis announced the appointment of Mike Cale, his chief financial officer in Fairfax County, as Brent Sandidge's replacement.¹⁸⁶ With Sandidge's departure, the financial service division changed to reflect Mike Cale's and ultimately Jack Davis'

¹⁸³Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹⁸⁴Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

¹⁸⁵Barry S. Morris, telephone conversation with author, 29 September 1993 and Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹⁸⁶Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes 1980-81," 52, 26 March 1981, 50.

imprint.¹⁸⁷ Mr. Cale began to institute programmed budgeting in the finance office. However, before he could take the programmed budgeting process to the same level of detail that he had implemented in Fairfax County, he had to work with Dr. Davis to build the department's computer capabilities. Cale and Davis set up a budget office for the education budget separate from finance and accounting. They also centralized accounting in the department, moving accountants who had previously been placed in service areas such as vocational education and special education to the finance office where they would work under Cale's direct supervision.¹⁸⁸

Davis inherited a state agency that had 505 full-time employees in 1978-79, the year before he took office. The first year that he was state superintendent he had the same number of department workers under his direction. However, the state budget submitted by Governor Dalton called for a 7.7% reduction in DOE personnel in the 1980-82 biennium. Dr. Davis then managed a department with thirty-nine fewer staff in both 1980-81 and 1981-82 than he had during his first year. Indeed, the 505 full-time available maximum

¹⁸⁷Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹⁸⁸June Eanes, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 13 January 1995.

employment level that Dr. Davis had in his first year in office was the largest number of staff that he would supervise in the eleven years he served as state superintendent.¹⁸⁹

Department Management Philosophy and Style

Dr. Davis' management philosophy and style in Richmond was similar to what it had been in Fairfax County. He continued to be an inclusive leader and solicited ideas from staff. He tried to make people feel a part of the organization. Staff meetings were run by Dr. Davis and staff members were encouraged to say what they wanted. Dr. Davis would listen. If he did not agree, he would make no comment. He would direct the opportunity for input around the table and ask for ideas. New staff members were always introduced and asked to tell about themselves. Davis was consultative; he tried to talk to all levels of staff within the department, and he listened well.¹⁹⁰ Davis was also characterized as a team person. He spent time team building and working collegially.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹Virginia Department of Education, "Historical M.E.L. Overview," an unpublished document found in the files of the Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia.

¹⁹⁰Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

¹⁹¹Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

Davis gave people in the department responsibility for carrying out their duties. At the same time he tried to stay abreast of what was going on and to keep his hand in the major projects that were being developed. From the beginning, Davis stressed his role as a "front man" for public education. He was highly visible, and he emphasized public relations. He was especially sensitive to problems that might arise. He knew how to move to take action to try to avoid differences that might occur. He handled matters external to the department well. Within the department Davis' deputy and assistant superintendents reported directly to him. However, he did not hesitate to go to lower echelon staff members for information if he felt it was necessary.¹⁹²

Jack Davis worked at communication. He enjoyed being in the field with students, teachers, and administrators. He liked groups of people and he especially liked discussing educational issues with them.¹⁹³

An interview with the education writer of the Richmond Times-Dispatch one week after Davis took over as state superintendent revealed much about his intentions. Davis told the interviewer that he intended "to make a determined

¹⁹²Smith, interview, 4 February 1994.

¹⁹³Shufflebarger, interview, 3 March 1993.

effort to keep in touch with his real customers, the children in the classroom." He emphasized that he understood the dangers of his new office in which impersonal statistics could take the place of individuals and the human touch could get lost. Davis also said that he would listen to non-professionals especially in regards to the young people who do not go to college but who need marketable job skills in high school. "The private sector that will hire these young people must be involved in the educational process," Davis stated.

The writer also confirmed the following:

Davis' appointment has provided a shot in the arm for sagging DOE morale. Professionals and nonprofessionals working there believe they have acquired a boss who is intimately concerned with their everyday problems, who wants to hear from them, who will respect their judgment. He has said for years that the good manager specialized in acting rather than reacting.¹⁹⁴

Changes Made

Following his appointment by Governor Dalton, Dr. Davis immediately set out to bring a more business-like approach to the state board. At the July 1979 meeting, ten days before Davis' term of office actually began, he alerted board members to a new procedure that would be followed for

¹⁹⁴Charles Cox "Davis Seeks Private Sector's Advice," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 7 August 1979, B-1.

sending the agenda and support materials to the board ten days prior to the scheduled meeting. The agenda and accompanying materials were to be formatted in a loose-leaf folder. Also, Davis announced that agendas would be planned three months in advance and board members would have an opportunity for input.¹⁹⁵ Davis also worked with the president of the board to develop a consent agenda to expedite the board's more routine business.¹⁹⁶

Dr. Davis also worked on improving communications. As he had in Fairfax County, he immediately increased department publications. Two newsletters were added. "On Board," a one-page newsletter, was sent out every two weeks; and "State-Ed" was issued every two weeks to division superintendents and chairpersons of local school divisions.¹⁹⁷ A "Super Gram" was also started to present department happenings more quickly to the various publics.

Campaign '80 for Public Education

S. John Davis' approach to management included a major focus on public relations. He traveled widely and spoke

¹⁹⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 20 July 1979, 113.

¹⁹⁶Morris, telephone conversation, 29 September 1993.

¹⁹⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1979," 50, 20 July 1979, 113.

often in his first years in office, more than any of his predecessors. After seven months as superintendent of public instruction, Dr. Davis announced a major public relations campaign. "Campaign '80 for Public Education" was an effort to accentuate the positive--to let the public know about the good things that were taking place in schools. Davis himself spearheaded the campaign. Speeches he made during 1980 had at least one section emphasizing the accomplishments of public education in Virginia. Various department publications and news releases to the media also stressed the campaign's theme.

In particular, Dr. Davis pointed out that more students were being expected to develop the skills they needed at each grade level because of the Standards of Learning. Stricter standards for promotion were being enforced. The student-teacher ratio was declining. Student test scores were improving. The number of students planning to continue their education in college or vocational school was increasing. Teacher preparation programs were being strengthened. The Standards of Quality were having a profound positive effect on public education. And, finally, the public was being involved more in decisions affecting the schools.

Department staff and board members also were asked to spread this positive message. Division superintendents,

local school boards, and teachers were encouraged to become involved in the campaign.¹⁹⁸

Davis on Leadership

In studying Jack Davis' approach to his job as superintendent of public instruction and analyzing his approach to management and leadership, his own utterances provide insight. In April 1981 Davis spoke to the annual conference of division superintendents in Roanoke. He gave his definition of the type of leadership that was needed.

Pointing out that there was a "negative climate of education--negative because, too frequently, the American people perceive their schools as failing to fulfill their expectations," Davis sought to answer the question "what sort of leadership do we need?" Dr. Davis' answer was that leadership needed to be the same as that sought for leaders of any major enterprise, whether it was business, industry, government, medicine, law, or public education. He spoke of the need for a leader to have character, which he defined as moral excellence and firmness; to have professional competence, which he defined as knowledge of one's job and skill in performing that job; to have other qualities such

¹⁹⁸S. John Davis, "Campaign '80 for Public Education," Public Education in Virginia, 16 no. 1 (Spring 1980), 1.

as motivation, dedication, initiative, courage, intelligence, judgment, common sense, managerial ability, energy, enthusiasm, interest in others, and sense of humor; and to have the ability to communicate.

But he centered his concept of leadership on what he called creative leadership. He viewed creativity as a directional force and noted that it was creativity that determined the way the other measures of leadership are applied. He said that educational leaders need charisma, the ability to inspire others with confidence and trust and a desire for the right action. Since the crucial factor for success in contemporary school management was how effectively a leader influenced his community, the degree to which a superintendent can inspire involvement will determine his effectiveness as a leader.¹⁹⁹

Dr. Davis saw himself as this type of leader and worked to implement the concept he outlined.

Summary

In 1979 Governor John N. Dalton appointed S. John Davis the sixteenth superintendent of public instruction for the Commonwealth of Virginia. During the two and one half years

¹⁹⁹S. John Davis, "Speech to the Annual Conference, Division Superintendents of Schools," 6 April 1981; in Davis' personal papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

remaining in the Dalton administration, Dr. Davis proved to be a proactive state superintendent.

Davis worked cooperatively with the administration, the legislature, the state board, and various educational groups to promote public education. Full funding of the Standards of Quality and increasing teachers' salaries nearer to the national average became the top two budgetary priorities of the state superintendent and the board of education. Major initiatives included the Standards of Learning Program and a revision of teacher certification requirements. The Administrative Review Process was broadened as an accountability measure.

Dr. Davis settled into the leadership of the department of education with the philosophy and style of management that had served him well in Fairfax County. The status quo was largely maintained in department organization and personnel during the Dalton years.

Chapter 4

THE ROBB YEARS

Politics

The Governor

Democrat Charles Spittal Robb of McLean, lieutenant-governor of Virginia during the administration of Governor John N. Dalton and son-in-law of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, was elected governor over Republican J. Marshall Coleman on November 3, 1981. The harmony that had prevailed at the Democratic convention and the disarray at the Republican's counterpart forecast the election results with the entire Democratic ticket being elected. Governor-elect Robb won 53.5 percent of the vote with a 101,000 plurality which carried nine of the state's congressional districts.¹

The governor's race was very visible, media oriented, and closely contested until the end of the campaign. Robb's campaign was built around a series of bulky position papers that gave few clues to what he would do but reinforced his claim that he would take a thoughtful, deliberate approach to issues and problems.² The two candidates' positions on taxes appeared to be the key issue. Coleman gave an

¹Larry Sabato, Virginia Votes, 1979-1982 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1983), 58.

²Dale Eisman, "Robb Wins Race for Governor," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 4 November 1981, A-1.

absolute pledge to veto any tax increase passed by the General Assembly. Robb's stand in opposition to a tax increase in general, while leaving his tax options open, seemed more responsible.³

Candidate Robb's position paper on education, ghost-written in part by S. John Davis,⁴ was a lengthy generalized document touting the importance of education to the Commonwealth, especially in economic development. Robb made it clear that more support was needed for educational advances in all areas.⁵ Although Robb stressed education as a top priority, and his opponent did not emphasize it as strongly, the two gubernatorial aspirants were not too different in their positions; education did not become a critical campaign issue.

Governor Robb's inaugural address on January 16, 1982, gave an indication of his intentions in education:

The most difficult phase of our journey and the greatest and most important of our tasks, is the requirement to strengthen the means for the education of our people. Nothing we do will be more important; no other effort will have as profound and lasting an impact upon our future. We must honor and reward as venerated professionals those whose inspiration and dedication impel them to the mission of teaching--in our

³Sabato, 82.

⁴Charles S. Robb, interview by author, Washington, DC, 28 April 1994.

⁵Eisman, "Robb Wins Race for Governor," A-1.

primary and secondary schools, in our community colleges, and in our colleges and universities.⁶

The reaction to Robb's inaugural speech recognized his accentuation of education. Former Governor Linwood Holton noted, "It was good emphasis to stress education and economics." Former Lieutenant-Governor Henry Howell was pleased with Robb's emphasis "on education and the need to pay our teachers a decent wage." Dr. Larry Sabato, a political analyst at the University of Virginia, commented, "Robb's emphasis on education in his inaugural address means he may intend to become Virginia's next education governor."⁷

Two days later in his State of the Commonwealth speech to the General Assembly, the governor was more detailed about his educational program. He first pointed out that Virginia was fortunate to have some of the best schools and universities in the country within its boundaries. However, he was concerned that "we rank thirty-fifth in the nation and last among our sister states in the South in salaries for new teachers. If we fail to address this deficiency, we will find that the quality of our educational programs will

⁶Charles S. Robb, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, "Inaugural Address," 16 January, 1982, Senate Document Number 2A, Commonwealth of Virginia, 3.

⁷Margie Fisher, "Robb's Inaugural Talk Draws Good Reviews," Roanoke Times and World News, 17 January 1982, A-1.

correspond to its national ranking in teacher compensation."⁸

Governor Robb then added, "Governor Dalton has proposed a cost-of-living increase. I believe we must do more." Robb also stressed improving the quality of teaching at the same time more money was being pumped into salaries. To do so, he avowed that teacher certification requirements would be strengthened and graduation requirements for students would be upgraded.⁹

The Reappointment

The transition from the Republican administration of John N. Dalton to that of Democrat Charles S. Robb was uncomplicated for S. John Davis. When the Robb administration's transition team was assembled and at work, Secretary of Education J. Wade Gilley called David McCloud, Robb's point-man in the transition and his soon-to-be chief-of-staff and reminded him that Jack Davis had been a non-political choice as state superintendent. McCloud agreed, remembering that Governor Dalton's executive assistant had called the lieutenant governor's office to ask if there were

⁸Charles S. Robb, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, "Address to the General Assembly of Virginia," 18 January 1982, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

⁹Ibid.

any objections to Davis' appointment.¹⁰

Governor Robb's children had attended public schools in Fairfax County during Davis' superintendency there. Chuck and Lynda Robb had co-chaired a school board referendum committee for Superintendent Davis and the Fairfax County School Board. As lieutenant-governor, Robb had recommended Davis to Governor Dalton when Davis was initially named Virginia's chief state school officer in 1977. He had told Dalton, "If you appoint Dr. Davis, I will reappoint him if I am elected."¹¹

When Robb was elected governor in 1981, the appointment of the superintendent of public instruction was what he called a "no-brainer."¹² On January 14, 1982, two days before his inauguration, Governor-elect Robb announced that he would retain twenty-two state agency chiefs from the Dalton administration. Prominent among those reappointed was S. John Davis, superintendent of public instruction.¹³

Governor Robb's appointee as secretary of education was John C. Casteen, III, an educator from the University of

¹⁰David K. McCloud, telephone conversation with author, 28 January 1995.

¹¹Robb, interview, 28 April 1994.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Dale Eisman, "Dalton Agency Chiefs to Be Retained by Robb," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 15 January 1982.

Virginia. Dr. Casteen, a man of intellect, scholarship, and higher education experience, joined Superintendent Davis in forming Robb's team to provide educational leadership for the new administration.

The Executive Branch

The years of the Robb administration have been called "the glory years" of S. John Davis' state superintendency. One reason for Davis' success in this era was the close, positive, supportive relationship that Dr. Davis had with the governor. A friendship that began in Fairfax County ripened when Robb became lieutenant-governor. Davis provided Robb with information on educational matters, and the two men developed a comfortable working relationship. After Robb became Virginia's chief executive, that relationship continued. The governor would call Superintendent Davis on the phone directly, bypassing secretaries, to discuss educational matters of interest to him.¹⁴

Dr. Davis and his top staff members at the department of education met with Governor Robb an estimated thirty to forty times during his four year term. This contrasted to meeting with Governor Baliles four to five times during his

¹⁴Robb, interview, 28 April 1994 and Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

administration.¹⁵ The President of the Virginia Board of Education during part of the Robb administration also has recounted that "Governor Robb was really a supporter of education and of Jack Davis."¹⁶

Secretary of Education Casteen and Superintendent Davis also had a good working relationship. Although Casteen concentrated on higher education and Davis ran the K-12 sector, the two men worked in harmony on a number of projects. Dr. Davis believed that Dr. Casteen had a "good feeling for education" in the state. "Casteen was," Davis said, "like a sponge; he would discuss an idea; if he liked it, he would support it." He particularly liked distance learning, technology, summer magnet schools, and the Governor's School.¹⁷

In the Robb era economic conditions improved, money became more plentiful, and education budgets increased dramatically. The governor, the secretary of education, and the state superintendent worked cooperatively. Both Robb and Casteen would mention things that they were interested in and then work with Davis, the board, and the department to accomplish them. Projects like the model high school at

¹⁵E. B. Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

¹⁶Willard L. Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

¹⁷Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

Varina and the magnet schools for science and technology were initiated by the chief executive and his education secretary, and Davis and department of education staff worked closely with the governor and the secretary in the implementation phase. Some basic ideas originated with the governor and the secretary; some basic ideas began with Dr. Davis and the department. The relationship was close, collaborative, and positive.¹⁸

The Legislative Branch

S. John Davis' relationship with the General Assembly during the Robb years continued much as it had in the Dalton administration with the added caveat that the governor and the majority in the legislature were now of the same political party. With E. B. Howerton, Jr., serving as his chief legislative liaison, Dr. Davis worked one-on-one with members of the General Assembly, provided them with needed information whenever asked, and sought to curry favor whenever he could.¹⁹ Howerton took care of routine matters and helped decide when Dr. Davis was needed to testify or quietly lobby for or against certain bills.²⁰

¹⁸John C. Casteen, III, telephone conversation, 14 March 1995.

¹⁹Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

²⁰Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

An example of Davis' careful cultivation of key members of the General Assembly was the speech writing service that he provided. In Davis' files are drafts of addresses on educational topics that he and top department of education staff wrote. For example, the first draft of a talk to be delivered by Delegate Mary Sue Terry, D-Patrick County, at the annual meeting of the Virginia School Boards Association and the Virginia Association of School Administrators is in Davis' personal files. The address stressed the importance of communication in educational leadership and suggested that two things should be communicated--cooperation and innovation. The body of the paper included key ideas that Dr. Davis concentrated on in his own speeches. Additional money for teachers' salaries, regional programs, using local community resources to supplement and strengthen educational programs, merit pay for teachers, and increased technology were all included in Delegate Terry's remarks.²¹

The Board of Education

Throughout the four years of the Robb administration, the governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the board of education worked cooperatively and shared the

²¹S. John Davis, draft of an address for Mary Sue Terry, Member, General Assembly of Virginia, 9 September 1982, Davis' Private Papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

same basic goals for public education.²² In fact, with the governor's support the climate on the board improved considerably for Dr. Davis from the chill of the December 1981 debacle when the board rejected his recommended teacher certification changes. Robb, faced with two appointments to the board in January 1982, replaced Davis' opponent Dr. Woodrow Robinson with former House Education Committee Chairman and Appropriations Committee member Willard L. Lemmon of Marion and retained Henry Tulloch, who had supported Davis' position on the certification issue.²³

Many of the members of the board of education during the Robb years were like Lemmon--influential, experienced education advocates. Henry Tulloch was manager of public affairs for the General Electric Company in Waynesboro and had also taught at several universities. Mark Fravel and Robert DeFord were college professors and Allix James was a college president. Five board members--Kenneth White, Agnes MacCaulay, Adelard Brault, James Dyke, and Ronnie Montgomery --were attorneys. Brault, like Lemmon, was an ex-member of the General Assembly. Women members Margaret Marston of Arlington, who served on the National Commission on Excellence in Education which wrote "A Nation at Risk";

²²Willard L. Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

²³Staff, "Lemmon Named to Board, Tulloch Reappointed," Public Education in Virginia, 17 no. 4 (Winter 1982), 21.

Frances Lewis of Richmond, whose family owned and operated Best Products; and Suzanne Thomas, who was a Northern Virginia neighbor of the governor, were all highly competent business and civic leaders. Table 8 is a list of board of education members during the Robb administration.

Kenneth S. White of Lynchburg, board president in 1984 and 1985, demonstrated the board's solidarity of purpose with Governor Robb, Secretary Casteen, and Dr. Davis in an interview in the summer of 1984. When asked to name the most significant events in recent years to improve the quality of education in Virginia, White listed four happenings: (1) revised accreditation standards, (2) new teacher certification regulations, (3) the establishment of passing scores on the National Teachers Examinations for beginning teachers, and (4) the very significant increased funding for public education provided by the governor and the General Assembly for the 1984-86 biennium. Like Dr. Davis and other administration spokespersons, White said that the most serious challenge facing education was that of devising ways to attract and keep competent teachers in the classroom and the "solution relates in large measure to the dollars available."²⁴

²⁴Staff, "Board President Looks at Public Education," Public Education in Virginia, 20 no. 2 (Summer 1984), 2.

Table 8

Members of the Virginia Board of Education 1982-1985

Member	1982	1983	1984	1985
H. Ronnie Montgomery Jonesville, Lawyer	X			
Avis W. Pringle Bassett, Civic Leader	X	X		
Thomas R. Watkins Hampton, Lawyer	a	a		
Dr. Mark Fravel, Jr. Chesapeake, College Prof.	X	X	X	
Dr. Allix B. James Richmond, College Pres.	X	X	X	
Margaret S. Marston Arlington, Civic Leader	X	X	X	X
Henry W. Tulloch Waynesboro, Businessman	X	X	X	X
Kenneth S. White Lynchburg, Lawyer	X	X	b	b
Willard L. Lemmon Marion, Businessman	X	X	X	X
Agnes H. MacCaulay Richmond, Lawyer		X		
Frances A. Lewis Richmond, Best Products			X	X
Robert H. DeFord, Jr. Chesapeake, College Prof.			X	X
Suzanne F. Thomas Alexandria, Civic Leader			X	X
Adelard L. Brault Fairfax, Lawyer				X
James W. Dyke, Jr. Keswick, Lawyer				X

a President of state board in 1982 and 1983

b President of state board in 1984 and 1985

President White, as had Dr. Davis and Governor Robb on numerous occasions, advocated master teacher and pay-for-performance pilot programs. With all branches of the administration on the same wave length in public education, Dr. Davis continued building close personal relationships with board members, socializing with them, providing them with information, and communicating with them frequently.²⁵

Education Interest Groups

Superintendent Davis also continued to communicate with other state education interest groups. The Virginia Education Association, in particular, found little fault with Davis, especially as funding for education increased in the Robb administration. Many local school boards and local superintendents also supported Davis' work as state financial support to the localities grew. However, some division superintendents expressed frustration with what they saw as over-regulation in the expanding administrative review process, and others believed that the department of education under Davis' leadership was becoming too bureaucratic.

Dr. Davis continued to travel often and widely, speaking frequently before groups all over the state. Like

²⁵Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

President James Monroe's "Era of Good Feeling" in the 1800s, Davis' "Era of Good Feeling" lasted throughout the Robb years. However, as with Monroe's Latin American policy, the potential for difficulty was ever present.

Funding

The Dalton-Robb Budget

As the Robb administration prepared to take office, the funding of education appeared to be a major challenge. Economic conditions in 1981-82 had caused Governor Dalton to reduce state funding, and localities had responded by cutting the number of school personnel, holding back salary increases, and eliminating or trimming many educational programs and services.²⁶ The state also was concerned with uncertainty in the level of federal funding, the ravages of inflation, full funding of the Standards of Quality, and the need to increase teachers' salaries.

Dr. Davis outlined the picture of public school finances in Virginia when he noted in October of 1981, a month before the gubernatorial election, that "both the board of education and I are deeply concerned about the need for additional funds for the state to pay more of the

²⁶Virginia Woodward, "Budget Tightening Squeezes Many School Divisions," Public Education in Virginia, 18 no. 1 (Spring 1982), 1.

operational costs of public schools." He further suggested that teacher salaries were lagging behind the national average, the rate of inflation, and the per capita income of other Virginians in non-teaching occupations. Davis argued that in past years the per pupil expenditures required to support the standards of quality had failed to meet the actual per pupil costs.²⁷

Although Governor Robb characterized education as the top priority of his administration, he was not able to generate much of an increase in financing over what Governor Dalton had budgeted for the 1982-84 biennium. Dalton recommended \$2,286,066,400; the board of education asked for \$566,600,000 above the Dalton figures; and the 1982 General Assembly appropriated \$2,343,000,000.²⁸ Required expenditures per pupil in state and local funds to meet the standards were increased to \$1,320 in 1982-83 and to \$1,467 in 1983-84, the largest biennial increase in required per pupil expenditure since the standards were adopted in 1972. Governor Robb endorsed budget increases to provide higher salaries for teachers and was successful as the General Assembly set a goal for increasing teachers' salaries by ten

²⁷S. John Davis, "Address to VASA and VSBA Annual Conference on Finances," 1 October 1981, 1.

²⁸Staff, "Legislature Appropriates \$2,343,000,000 for Public Education for 1982-84," Public Education in Virginia, 18 no. 1 (Spring 1982), 1.

percent during each year of the biennium. Localities would also have to increase their funding for salaries to accomplish this goal. Remedial education received \$35,000,000, which was twice the sum appropriated for the previous biennium.²⁹

Following the 1982 session of the state legislature, the state board approved a resolution of support for the increase in teachers' salaries, the increase in basic and categorical aid to localities, and the increase in per-pupil basic aid and personnel costs for both 1982-83 and 1983-84 at its regular March meeting. Dr. Davis indicated to the board that he was concerned by interpretations that he had heard from parts of the state that the state had funded the entire ten percent increase in teachers' salaries. Local funds were also needed to fund the increase.³⁰

At the September 1982 board of education meeting, discussion centered around the problem of localities that did not give the ten percent salary increase to teachers. The board asked the department to seek information from the school divisions regarding the extent to which they met the legislative objective to give the ten percent raise to

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1982," 53, 26 March 1982, 44.

classroom teachers in the 1982-83 fiscal year.³¹ Forty-one school divisions actually increased the average salary of classroom teaching positions by ten percent. Ninety-eight localities did not meet the target set by the governor, the legislature, and the state board.³²

Governor Robb's First Biennial Budget

As the board of education prepared its budget proposals for Governor Robb for 1984-86, it was clear that substantial increases in spending were needed and expected. Full funding of the standards and increased teachers' salaries remained the two primary focal points. In a June status report on the 1984-86 target budget, the board and department staff projected an increase for education of almost twenty-five percent.³³

At a three-day Commonwealth Conference on Education convened in November 1983 by Governor Robb, money and the best use of it to strengthen Virginia's educational system were the reoccurring themes and set the stage for the 1984

³¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1982," 53, 24 September 1982, 149.

³²Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, June 1984, 8-12.

³³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1983," 54, 24 June 1983, 87.

General Assembly. In his keynote address the governor emphasized the need for increases in teacher compensation and new priorities for education in Virginia.³⁴

Then in January Governor Robb, asserting that public education had the highest priority in his administration, proposed that the state spend almost 3.2 billion dollars in general and non-general revenue funds for the operation of public education in the 1984-86 biennium, an increase of more than twenty percent over the 1982-84 biennium. The governor requested funding to finance the state's share of a proposed ten percent salary increase for fifty-four instructional personnel per 1,000 students ADM for each year of the biennium. He also asked for funds to support the state's share of basic school aid at \$1,605 per student during 1984-85 and \$1,753 per student during 1985-86, figures slightly below requests made by the Board of Education.³⁵

At the opening of the 1984 legislature the governor stated, "Competition in the Marketplace of the twenty-first century demands that we increase now our commitments to

³⁴Virginia Woodward, "Governor Urges Effective Spending for Education," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 4, (Winter 1984), 3.

³⁵Staff, "Governor Requests Boosts in Education Budget," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 4, (Winter 1984), 1.

public education, and indeed education remains my highest priority." Avowing that higher salaries alone would not guarantee excellence in education, the governor asked for funds for new equipment for research and training, the Governor's Center for Educational Innovation and Technology at Varina High School, and four magnet schools emphasizing science, mathematics, fine arts, and technical trades.³⁶

The General Assembly controlled by Governor Robb's Democratic Party gave the governor much of what he had requested in his education budget. When the legislative body adjourned March 12, 1984, it had appropriated \$2,812,942,640 in state funds for aid to localities for 1984-86. This total exceeded by eighty-one million (20.6 percent) the amount allocated during 1982-84. The required per pupil expenditure to meet the Standards of Quality program increased from \$1,464 to \$1,605 in 1984-85 and to \$1,776 in 1985-86. The number of instructional personnel each school division was required to employ per 1,000 pupils in average daily membership increased from 54 to 55 in 1985-86.

It was the intent of the General Assembly that the salaries of classroom teachers be increased by ten percent

³⁶Charles S. Robb, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, "Address to the General Assembly," 11 January 1994, Virginia State Library, Richmond.

from state and local funds during each year of the biennium. Funds were included to finance the newly established Governor's Center for Innovation and Technology at Varina High School and six magnet schools, five for science and technology and one for the fine arts to provide in depth, specialized curricula for high school students at selected regional sites.³⁷

The 1985 short session of the General Assembly brought only a few changes to the 1985-86 education budget. The basic aid per pupil amount required was increased to \$1,901, and funding for instructional staff per 1,000 ADM was increased by one as previously projected. The board of education, at the conclusion of the legislative session, was still concerned about the lack of full funding of the Standards of Quality and sent a letter to Governor Robb, Secretary of Education Casteen, the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee to that effect.³⁸

Governor Robb's Final Budget

Soon after the 1985 adjournment of the General

³⁷Staff, "Legislature Approves Education Budget Totaling \$2.8 Million in State Funds," Public Education in Virginia, 20 no. 1 (Spring 1984), 1.

³⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1985," 56, 22 February 1985, 25.

Assembly, department of education staff and the board of education began preparation for the 1986-88 biennial budget. At the March 1985 regular meeting Mike Cale, associate superintendent for finance, asked board members to begin listing their priorities for 1986-88. On April 25 board members discussed their priorities and approved W. L. Lemmon's motion to adopt as its number one priority the full funding of the Standards of Quality and to have the staff identify the eleven other initiatives as additional priorities in no rank order. Board comments on the initiatives were forwarded to Secretary Casteen.³⁹

In June Mr. Cale reviewed Governor Robb's 1986-88 Target Guidance Memorandum with the board. The governor had accepted funding of the Standards of Quality as the number one budget priority and had established set-aside accounts in reserve for funds on a preliminary basis to fund fully the Standards of Quality. Cale also reported that the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) was in the process of revalidating the costing out of full funding of the Standards of Quality with the joint commission's report to be available in October.⁴⁰ On July 31 the board

³⁹Board of Education, "Minutes, 1985," 56, 25 April 1985, 47.

⁴⁰Board of Education, "Minutes, 1985," 56, 20 June 1985, 72.

approved the state superintendent's recommendation on the 1986-88 budget for submission to the governor. The aid to locality request was \$3,622,355,380, an increase of \$800 million over the 1984-86 budget.⁴¹

Governor Robb's budget guidelines required the department of education to submit a proposal to establish and fund an elementary guidance counseling program as a part of the budget submitted for 1986-88. The board proposed that the state fund one additional professional position for each 1,000 students in ADM for 1986-88 to be distributed on an equalized basis within basic school aid at a cost of \$17,364,000 in 1986-87 and \$18,662,539 in 1987-88.⁴²

As the members of the General Assembly convened for the 1986 session of the legislature, the Robb budget was released. The governor proposed spending \$3,528,059,911 on education in the 1986-88 biennium. The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported that "Governor Charles S. Robb delivered on his claims to be an education governor by recommending substantial new spending for public education."⁴³

Highlights of the budget included: (1) raises of up to 12.8

⁴¹Board of Education, "Minutes, 1985," 56, 31 July 1985, 84.

⁴²Board of Education, "Minutes, 1985," 56, 24 September 1985, appendix A.

⁴³Michael Hardy, "Robb Budget Includes More Education Funds," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 10 January 1986, A-1.

percent for public school teachers in 1986-87 and 1987-88, (2) a \$376 million allocation to fund fully the state's share to localities to meet Virginia's Standards of Quality program, and (3) a directive that a school board would have to award at least a ten percent increase in teachers' salaries the first year of the biennium before the locality could qualify for the increased educational aid from the state the second year.⁴⁴

The board of education had said an additional \$500 million was needed to fund fully the Standards of Quality. The General Assemblies' watch dog unit, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, had said in its report that about \$190 million would do the job. Robb's request for \$376 million was sixty-two million closer to the board's request than it was to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission evaluation. Yet it was lower than the board of education's original budget request.

Master Teacher and Pay-for-Performance Initiatives

In Virginia, as in much of the nation, there was great interest in various merit pay ideas for teachers during the 1980s. The General Assembly endorsed the concept as early as 1981 by adopting House Joint Resolution 93 which called

⁴⁴Ibid.

for a study of differentiated pay for classroom teachers.⁴⁵ Governor Robb also advocated advancing master pay and pay-for-performance plans for teachers in Virginia at the beginning of his administration.⁴⁶

The board of education and superintendent of public instruction began discussion of the implications of House Joint Resolution 93 and Governor Robb's interest in differentiated pay plans for classroom teachers at its regular meeting December 10, 1982. Dr. Davis recommended to the board that it take official action encouraging local school divisions to study the implementation of plans for the differentiated compensation of teachers and that it request funds from the General Assembly for school divisions which submitted differentiated compensation plans acceptable to the board of education. The board agreed to recommend that local school divisions examine the appropriateness of such compensation plans.⁴⁷

Following the General Assembly session of 1983, the Governor appointed a Task Force on Performance Pay. Joseph P. King, an executive with Union Camp, and Dr. E. B.

⁴⁵General Assembly of Virginia, House Joint Resolution 93, March 1981.

⁴⁶Charles S. Robb, Governor of Virginia, Executive Papers, State of the Commonwealth Address, January 1982, 3.

⁴⁷Board of Education, "Minutes, 1982," 53, 10 December 1982, 185.

Howerton, Jr., of the department of education staff, were appointed co-chairmen.⁴⁸ The task force began meeting in the fall of 1983 and reported to the board of education in September that it had set two goals: (1) to develop a master teacher plan for public schools and (2) to write a Request for Proposals form for local school divisions to use as an application for state funding of pilot projects on performance pay for teachers.⁴⁹

At the January 1984 meeting of the state board, the Task Force on Performance Pay reported its recommendations that a career ladder plan be considered which consisted of four teacher levels: probationary, teacher, senior, and master. Pay increments of \$5,000 at the senior level and \$8,000 at the master's level were suggested. The task force also recommended that the plan be piloted before implementation was considered.⁵⁰

The board of education asked Governor Robb to include \$500,000 to finance experimental pay-for-performance programs in selected school systems in the 1984-86 budget.

⁴⁸E. B. Howerton, Jr., telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

⁴⁹Board of Education, "Minutes, 1983," 54, 22 September 1983, 142.

⁵⁰Board of Education, "Minutes, 1984," 55, 9 January 1984, 1.

The governor requested \$500,000,⁵¹ and the General Assembly then appropriated \$200,000 each year of the biennium for experimental projects to be conducted on a grant basis in several localities.⁵² In 1984-85 five pilot programs were established in localities to examine issues related to pay-for-performance, and in 1985-86 three programs were funded to plan and implement career ladder programs.⁵³ The first program was at Varina High School in Henrico County and was an integral part of the model high school. Other localities with pilot programs included the cities of Danville and Roanoke and King William/West Point.

Local school divisions also had the opportunity to establish their own plans in view of the findings of the various studies, and some did. For example, rural Orange County identified fifteen characteristics of teaching exhibited by successful teachers, then specified performance indicators for the characteristics, determined a means for documenting behaviors, and set a pay differential scale for teachers who demonstrated proficiency in instructional

⁵¹Staff, "Governor Requests Boosts in Education Budget," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 4 (Winter 1984), 1.

⁵²Staff, "Legislature Approves Education Budget," Public Education in Virginia, 20 no. 1 (Spring 1984), 1.

⁵³Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1985-86, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1986, 9.

performance.⁵⁴

Virginia's merit pay/master teacher plans received notice nationally. In November of 1983 the Phi Delta Kappan highlighted Virginia's program by reviewing Governor Robb's budget initiatives and his interest in merit pay. The Kappan reported:

In Virginia Governor Charles S. Robb has appointed a Governor's Advisory Commission for Education to develop a statewide merit pay plan, to develop guidelines for the selection of pilot school districts, and to approve the selection of school districts for the pilot project on merit pay. This commission has also been asked to consider a statewide master teacher plan, but movement on this idea has not been as quick as on plans to test merit pay.⁵⁵

Education Initiatives

Education in the United States in the first half of the decade of the 1980s was dominated by the reports of the various reform commissions and the changes that ineluctably followed. Virginia was no exception. A governor who made education the highest priority, a board of education member on the National Commission on Excellence in Education, and a superintendent of public instruction and a secretary of

⁵⁴Clarence M. Edwards, "Performance Pay Plan for Teachers Is Developed in Orange County," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 3 (Fall 1983), 7.

⁵⁵Chris Pipho, "Merit Pay/Master Teacher Plans Attract Attention in the States," Phi Delta Kappan, November 1983, 166.

education who were proactive on educational reform made Virginia a hotbed of initiatives designed to improve the quality of education and restore the public's confidence in the public schools.

The Robb administration prided itself on Virginia's perceptive, early response to the criticism inherent in the various task forces that were making recommendations for the improvement of education. At the annual meeting of the Virginia School Boards Association and the Virginia Association of School Administrators in 1983, the state superintendent stated that he would report "on some major programs that have been undertaken in Virginia to strengthen public education. The first three that I will report on were started long before the federal government's Commission on Excellence was appointed by Secretary of Education Terrell Bell."⁵⁶

Similarly, the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, sponsored by the Education Commission of the States and chaired by Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina, recommended that each governor join with legislators, state and local boards of education, business and labor leaders, and others in the creation of a state

⁵⁶S. John Davis, "Speech to the Virginia Association of School Administrators and Virginia School Board Association Annual Meeting," 2 October 1983, Personal Papers, Midlothian, Virginia, 1.

task force to assess statewide and local needs and develop an action plan for improving that state's schools.⁵⁷

However, Governor Hunt acknowledged that "under the able leadership of Governor Charles Robb of Virginia, extraordinary initiatives aimed at improving education are already underway."⁵⁸

Governor Robb sought to accomplish two educational objectives during his tenure in the State House: (1) public awareness of the importance of education and (2) financial support for education.⁵⁹ In a way the Robb years were golden years. Money became more plentiful; the budget grew dramatically; teachers' salaries increased expeditiously. The administration worked cooperatively with the state superintendent, the state department, and the state board to plan for improvements in education.⁶⁰ Commissions were formed, ideas exploded, and changes were initiated.

Governor's Task Force on Science and Technology in Virginia

In July of 1982 Governor Charles S. Robb set up a task force to study science and technology education in Virginia.

⁵⁷James B. Hunt, Jr., "Education for Economic Growth: A Critical Investment," Phi Delta Kappan, April 1984, 539.

⁵⁸Ibid, 540.

⁵⁹Charles S. Robb, interview, 28 April 1994.

⁶⁰S. John Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

Chaired by T. Justin Moore, Jr., the task force was asked to study the state's total educational system, concentrating on course offerings and programs in mathematics and science and on the graduates of such programs to assess the status of preparation of Virginia's labor force to meet the demands of industries which used technology. The governor was interested in learning how Virginia might attract future-oriented, high-technology industries into the Commonwealth. The report of the task force was presented to the governor in July of 1983.

The Task Force on Science and Technology in Virginia agreed with the conclusions of the National Commission on Excellence in Education and the National Science Board Commission that the educational crisis extended from the university level throughout K-12 public education. The task force report affirmed that elementary and high schools in Virginia faced many difficulties in trying to meet the needs of an ever increasingly high-tech society. Also, the task force saw high-technology industries being inexorably linked to the fields of science and engineering and to colleges and universities that produced needed graduates. A low percentage of students in Virginia were prepared for engineering careers, and minority percentages were even lower.

The solutions to these problems were presented in

twenty-five recommendations, six of which dealt with elementary and secondary schools. The six were as follows:

(1) The state should require all high school graduates to complete two years of science and two years of mathematics between grades 9-12, and all college bound students should be required to complete one additional year of mathematics between grades 9-12. (2) A science education framework should be implemented to ensure that all high school graduates have a balanced program in the physical and biological sciences, have a knowledge of the major concepts of a particular science course, and have a program of science designed for the development of scientific skills, processes, and attitudes. (3) Pilot schools of science and technology and the Governor's School for the Gifted in the areas of mathematics and science should be expanded. (4) Strong emphasis should be placed upon helping to alleviate the mathematics and science high school teacher shortage and upon improving the backgrounds of those currently teaching mathematics and science in high schools. (5) Additional emphasis should be placed upon the development of science programs for the elementary schools and for the strengthening of elementary teachers' science and mathematics backgrounds. (6) In the state's elementary and high schools, additional emphasis should be placed upon the effective utilization of the newer educational technologies

such as microcomputers and video discs as a means of enhancing educational programs in mathematics and science.

Without this expansion, the task force saw Virginia's labor market becoming more and more handicapped as employment opportunities increased in the high-tech area. Also, many present workers would need re-training to remain employed. Therefore, Virginia's colleges and universities would have to expand their services to train tomorrow's labor force and re-train many of today's labor force.⁶¹

State Superintendent's Statewide Planning Committee

Dr. S. John Davis convened a committee on March 21, 1984, and charged it with two tasks. The first was to provide continuous advice to the state superintendent and the State Board of Education over a period of time. The second was to review the board's Six-Year Plan and Objectives and the needs section of the board's Annual Report on Public Education and to suggest revisions of these reports.

The planning committee met three times and submitted its report to Dr. Davis on June 1, 1984. Two "over-arching concerns" for public education in Virginia were listed:

⁶¹Commonwealth of Virginia, The Report of the Governor's Task Force on Science and Technology, Richmond, Virginia, July 1983, 1-15.

One, schooling should be viewed "as an articulated program from kindergarten through the university level"; and two, citizen and community involvement in and support of the schools must become fundamental to education.

Nine needs were identified by the committee regarding public education. Those needs were: (1) a need for a group external from the Department of Education to meet regularly and to provide advice to the state board, (2) a need for high quality inservice activities to be provided to all public educators from the classroom teacher to the division superintendent, (3) a need for more and greater attention for alternative programs within the schools aimed for the "at risk" student, (4) a need to emphasize the educational requirements of the minority student, (5) a need to improve the quality of textbooks, (6) a need for school board members to be trained, (7) a need to implement the Standards of Quality statewide, (8) a need to ensure that teachers were appropriately using the Standards of Learning objectives, (9) a need to "reconceptualize vocational education" and to expand its offerings to all students in school.⁶²

⁶²Commonwealth of Virginia, State Superintendent's Statewide Planning Committee Report, Richmond, 1 June 1984, 1-15.

The Governor's Commission on Virginia's Future

In November of 1982 Governor Charles S. Robb appointed the Governor's Commission on Virginia's Future and charged its members to "define a vision of what we want Virginia to be, and then ask ourselves, 'what must we do to achieve it?'"⁶³ The commission chaired by former Senator William B. Spong, Jr., then Dean of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William and Mary, was subdivided into five task forces: economic development, education, environment and natural resources, government and planning, and human resources.

The Education Task Force's report in December 1984 gave credit to Virginia's public schools for their accomplishments to date, declaring that "public elementary and secondary schools are better now than they were in 1960, despite the upheaval of massive resistance and desegregation." It further gave credit to Governor Robb for "focusing attention on the critical needs of public education and for providing the leadership necessary to increase the percentage of state spending allocated to local schools."⁶⁴ However, the report also criticized the state

⁶³Report of the Governor's Commission on Virginia's Future, Vol. I, Toward A New Dominion: Choices for Virginians, December 1984, 7.

⁶⁴Ibid., 19.

for failure to meet its obligations in public education.⁶⁵

Eight recommendations were made in the Education Task Force's report: (1) Education should be the highest priority of the Commonwealth; Virginia should rank among the top ten states in the quality of education offered; and at least one Virginia University should rank among the nation's top twenty-five research universities. (2) Virginia should increase spending on education to a level commensurate with its fiscal capacity. (3) Disparities in educational quality in Virginia should be reduced. (4) Virginia should create conditions that make teaching a career with financial and professional rewards equal to its importance. (5) Each school division should ensure that each student is functionally literate before completing the elementary grades. (6) Early childhood and adult education should receive greater emphasis. (7) Virginia should exploit the full potential of new technology as a major part of its efforts to upgrade education at all levels. (8) The governance of public education at all levels should be reexamined and reshaped.⁶⁶

Governor Robb's Commission on Virginia's Future called for change that would cost the state considerably more money

⁶⁵Ibid., 24.

⁶⁶Ibid., Vol II, 19-21.

for public education. The commission's report pointed out that while Virginia ranked above average among the states in ability to pay for education, it ranked among the bottom one-third in its spending on elementary and secondary education. To accommodate change, the commission suggested a revision in the funding formula and an increase in revenue for public education to fund fully the Standards of Quality mandated by the state's constitution.

Standards of Learning

The Standards of Learning Program was launched during the Dalton administration in 1980 to spell out expectations for students in all academic subjects K-12. In 1982, the first year of the Robb administration, language arts and mathematics objectives were implemented. Objectives in science, social studies, and health went to school divisions for use in the fall of 1983.⁶⁷ Objectives for physical education, foreign language, and fine arts were drafted in the summer of 1982, reviewed during the 1982-83 school year, and used in local school divisions on a trial basis in 1983-84. Full implementation of the SOLs occurred in the 1985-86

⁶⁷S. John Davis, "State Working Hard to Improve Educational Quality," Northern Virginia Sun, 12 March 1983, 1.

school year.⁶⁸

Competency-Based Education

Competency-Based Education (CBE) was the vocational equivalent of the Standards of Learning. Competency-Based Education was begun in the Dalton-Campbell era when the state board included it in the five-year state plan for vocational education.⁶⁹ Competency-Based Education established an instructional framework for vocational education based on the skills required for successful employment in a given occupation or field. Student progress was evaluated in terms of performance objectives, and mastery of these objectives was preparation needed for employment or advanced occupational training. Important to Competency-based Education was the coordination of instruction as students moved from high school to post-secondary education. Articulation agreements between school divisions and community colleges were drawn up to eliminate gaps and unnecessary duplication.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, March 1984, xii.

⁶⁹Hamilton Crockford, "CBE: Preparation for Employment," Public Education in Virginia, 17 no. 3 (Fall 1981), 5.

⁷⁰Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, March 1984, xiii.

In the development of the program three stages were followed: (1) researching the occupational domain and breaking the occupation down successively into jobs, duties, tasks, and steps of each task; (2) producing an instructional resource guide for each vocational program; and (3) writing an instructional materials manual for each program.⁷¹ When Dr. Davis became state superintendent in 1979, stage one was underway. He supervised work on stages two and three in 1981-82.

Virginia's Design for Learning

In 1983-84 the department of education combined Standards of Learning and Competency-Based Education materials in a three volume publication entitled The Virginia Design for Learning. Volume one described the entire program, and volumes two and three spelled out the academic objectives and job related skills that made up the substance of the academic and vocational programs. Volume two included SOL objectives previously published separately for language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health education, physical education, arts, foreign language, and computer literacy. Volume three included CBE tasks and skills along with assessment measures and

⁷¹Crockford, 7.

documentation procedures for vocational programs including agriculture, business, distribution education, health occupations, home economics, industrial arts, trade and industrial education, and special vocational programs for disadvantaged students.⁷²

Dr. Davis used the new Design for Learning as an example of how Virginia was setting its educational goals beyond minimum expectations. In an article printed in newspapers across the state, Davis wrote, "Challenged by a competitive but highly technological society in which quality makes a difference, we have been supplementing SOQ goals with standards in many areas."⁷³

Accreditation Standards

By 1982 the revision of the state's accreditation standards was well underway. At the July state board meeting Dr. Davis requested input from board members to assist staff in completing an initial draft.⁷⁴ Margaret Marston then presented a report on the activities of the National Commission on Excellence for the board and staff to

⁷²Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1983-84, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1985, 2-3.

⁷³Davis, "State Working Hard to Improve Educational Quality," Northern Virginia Sun, 12 March 1983, 1.

⁷⁴Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes 1982," 53, 3 July 1982, 93.

consider in updating the standards.⁷⁵ By the end of July 1983 a reworked version of the accreditation standards had been completed, hearings had been held, and the board had voted to approve the new standards effective in 1984-85.⁷⁶

The newly adopted accreditation standards were publicized as requiring more rigorous graduation requirements for high school students, more demanding instructional programs, strong instructional leadership in school and classroom, and greater involvement on the part of parents, business leaders, and other citizens.⁷⁷ Further, the standards "anticipated recommendations for change in the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education."⁷⁸

The revised standards of accreditation had the following stricter requisites: (1) students had to complete twenty units of course credit, two more than previously, and an optional advanced studies program required earning twenty-two units of credit to receive a diploma; (2)

⁷⁵Ibid., 114.

⁷⁶Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes 1983," 54, 29 July 1983, 118.

⁷⁷Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1983-84, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1985, xii.

⁷⁸Staff, "New Accreditation Standards Increase Requirements for High School Graduation," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 3 (Fall 1983), 1.

required mathematics and science increased from one year each to two years each plus a fifth unit in either, and for an advanced studies program three units each in math and at least three units in foreign language were required; (3) in the twenty unit program a "B" or better average could earn one the board of education seal on a diploma, and in the twenty-two unit advanced studies program "B" or better would earn a student a Governor's seal; (4) the twenty unit diploma required four units of credit in English, two units in math, two units in lab science, one additional unit in math or science, three units in social studies, two units in health and physical education, and six electives; (5) the twenty-two unit diploma required four units in English, three each in math, lab science, and social studies; three units in foreign language (or two units in one language and two in another); two units in health and physical education; and four or three electives depending on foreign language choice; (6) students had to pass minimum competency tests in reading and math to graduate from high school; (7) minimum course offerings increased in grades 9-12 from thirty-seven units to thirty-eight and experiences in computer technology were now required; (8) students were required to attend a full 5 1/2 hour day unless excused for good reasons by the division superintendent; (9) homework had to be assigned by local school division guidelines; (10) special attention was

given to middle schools defined as no grade below six and above nine; and (11) emphasis was given to guidance, instructional leadership, time-on-task, and community involvement in planning.⁷⁹

Teacher Certification

In December 1981 the board of education had adopted new teacher certification requirements, and in doing so rejected by a five to four vote several of Dr. Davis' key recommendations. Governor Robb made a significant change in the board of education when he did not reappoint Dr. Woodrow Robinson of Fairfax County, who had voted in the majority, but did reappoint Henry W. Tulloch of Waynesboro, who had supported Davis' proposal. With the other eight board members splitting the vote four to four, the vote of the newly appointed board member, W. L. Lemmon of Marion, became the key to possible new life for Dr. Davis' proposals.

The February 26, 1982, board meeting was a pivotal one. Showing the concern of the General Assembly and the administration over the defeat of Davis' proposals, Senator Elliot Schewel of Lynchburg appeared at the board meeting to discuss House Bill 833, titled Regulations Governing Teacher Certification. Schewel reported that it was the inclination

⁷⁹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, March 1984, xii.

of the Senate Committee on Education and Health to allow the bill to be defeated if the board of education took action in the direction of the majority opinion of the committee.

Schewel's follow-up questions centered on the probationary period and the evaluation of a teacher during that period.

Dr. Mack Fravel, an opponent, noted that funding for assessment was not a priority of the board in budgeting and that the process was an intrusion on local autonomy.

Dr. Allix James moved to amend action taken two months before in December on regulations governing teacher certification. His resolution stated that beginning July 1, 1984, all beginning teachers would satisfy a provisional period of not less than two years and the department would seek necessary financial assistance to establish and validate the standards upon which provisional certification would be elevated to full certificate status. The resolution carried with Mr. Lemmon joining the previous minority of Watkins, James, White, and Tulloch to provide the vote needed for approval.⁸⁰

Dr. Davis had won a key victory on the provisional period issue. However, the recommendation by Dr. Davis that students preparing to teach had to major in an academic subject like English or math and not in education courses

⁸⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes 1982," 53, 26 February 1982, 28-31.

would not be voted on by the board for several more years.

Beginning Teacher Assistance Program

The required assessment of beginning teachers was to be accomplished through the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program (BTAP). The Beginning Teacher Assistance Program was developed by department of education staff with help from school divisions, teacher preparation colleges and universities, and professional educators. Under the overall direction of Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., assistant superintendent for personnel and administrative field services, the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program was developed to identify novice teachers who failed to demonstrate minimum competencies. By the summer of 1983 seven competencies dealing with classroom performance that would have to be demonstrated had been identified.⁸¹

Originally planned for implementation after July 1, 1984, the program actually began one year later. Beginning teachers received a provisional certificate effective for two years and were required to demonstrate competencies in the classroom before receiving a five-year renewable certificate. Teachers were evaluated and then received

⁸¹Frank J. Walin, "New Program Being Designed to Assess Beginning Teachers," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 2 (Summer 1983), 2.

assistance as needed. Trained observers and standardized assessment procedures were used.⁸² The final program called for evaluation in fourteen areas of competency. The mandatory observation was made by three different educators at different times. Observers' ratings were then combined to make a single assessment. Teachers who failed to meet program standards attended seminars offered in each area of competency. Then a second assessment occurred, followed by another opportunity for help; then a third assessment would take place if requirements were not met. A review of the performance scores of a teacher who failed to measure up during the two-year period was conducted, and if no changes were made, the person was denied further certification in Virginia.⁸³

National Teachers' Examination

In 1980 the board of education in response to a General Assembly mandate began to use the National Teachers' Examination (NTE) as a proficiency test. In 1984 the board accepted a confirmation of the validity of the tests, and results of a study made for the board were used to establish

⁸²Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1983-84, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1985, 4.

⁸³Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1984-85, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1988, 4.

passing scores. Students were required to pass the core battery tests of communication skills, general knowledge, and professional knowledge and a subject specialty test.⁸⁴

The board allowed a two-year interval from 1984 to 1986 before the scores were to become effective. This delay gave students preparing for careers in teaching advance notice of what they needed to know for successful test performance.

The impact of Virginia's passing scores on graduates of historically black colleges was a concern. The board of education budgeted over one million dollars to help two state-supported, historically black institutions, Virginia State and Norfolk State, ameliorate the problem by developing and revising curriculum, improving students' test taking skills, and increasing support for recruiting talented students into teacher education programs.⁸⁵

Model School Projects

The Governor's Center for Educational Innovation and Technology at Varina High School in Henrico County was given impetus by Governor Robb's endorsement of the project in his

⁸⁴Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes 1984," 55, 14 September 1984, 142.

⁸⁵Virginia Woodward, "NTE, BTAP: Improving Teacher Performance," Public Education in Virginia, 21 no. 3 (Fall 1985), 8.

January 11, 1984, address to the General Assembly and the inclusion of funds for the project in the 1984-86 biennial budget. Planning began immediately for the Phase I model school project which was to begin in the fall of 1984. Not only was the governor intrigued with the project, but Secretary of Education Casteen was also engrossed in how the model school could be a showcase laboratory for the exploration of educational approaches to improve Virginia's public schools.⁸⁶ Robb, Casteen, Davis, and William D. Boshier, superintendent of schools in Henrico County, were the paramount figures in the Varina model school project.⁸⁷

Experiments at Varina included lengthening the school day for teachers and paying teachers for extra work, using the summer months for teacher training and additional courses for students, and improving student writing skills by using word processors. A distinguishing feature of the project was the collaborative involvement of administration, staff, students, community volunteers, business and industrial leaders, college and university personnel, and educators from the school divisions in the state. Organizational structure for the center included action

⁸⁶Staff, "Showcase Laboratory Planned for Public Education," Public Education in Virginia, 19 no. 4 (Winter 1984), 5.

⁸⁷Richard Boyer, personal interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 26 September 1994.

teams in curriculum development, instruction, faculty-staff development, and communication. Technology was used as a teaching and learning tool, and an electronic classroom was established to broadcast to small school divisions in isolated areas where limited enrollments made courses too expensive to be included in the local curriculum.⁸⁸

Dr. E. Wayne Bullis of Henrico County and Dr. Callie P. Shingleton and Patricia B. Walker of the department became the project's chief planners. Yet, Dr. Davis, Dr. Casteen, and Governor Robb himself paid close attention to the development of the model high school.⁸⁹

Although the Varina Model High School received most of the publicity as phase one of the model school projects, phase two was also acclaimed for the development of a model elementary school. Willard Elementary School in Norfolk under the leadership of Principal Lillian Brinkley served as a model elementary school for the rest of the state to study until state funding for model school projects was eliminated during the Wilder administration.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Staff, "Showcase Laboratory Planned for Public Education," 6.

⁸⁹Callie P. Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

⁹⁰Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1984-85, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, April 1988, 5.

Phase three of the model school program was implemented with the selection of four model middle schools. However, as a result of the report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education, the model school movement was changed to a broader program for restructuring middle schools across the state. By 1988 the model middle school concept had been abandoned and more than twenty Vanguard Middle Schools had been identified.⁹¹

Phase four was to have established an exemplary program for higher education with the thirty-six recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Excellence setting the educational agenda for the remainder of the Baliles administration. The final phase of the model school program was never implemented.⁹²

Magnet Schools

In 1983 Governor Robb proposed the creation of magnet schools of science and technology in Virginia to raise the level of public awareness in science and technology and a magnet school for the arts to promote education in the fine

⁹¹Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 23 June 1988, 3.

⁹²Margaret Roberts, telephone conversation, 3 April 1995.

and applied arts.⁹³ Funds were appropriated in the 1984-86 biennial budget, and planning for the schools took place in 1984-85. A magnet summer program began in 1985 with a four-week fine arts program at Norfolk and with sessions at six summer magnet schools for science and technology in Southwest Virginia. Full-term programs in science and technology began in the fall of 1985 in Fairfax County and in Hampton, Lynchburg, and Roanoke cities. A full-time arts program began in Norfolk in the fall of 1987.⁹⁴

The schools were designed to strengthen math and science instruction, to demonstrate how technology can best be used to increase learning, to provide students with learning opportunities unavailable in regular high schools, to enable public school teachers to sharpen math and science skills by working with practitioners in science and technology in the private sector, to encourage experimentation in teaching methods and materials, and to promote student experimentation in technical fields.⁹⁵

⁹³Callie P. Shingleton and Alison Griffin, "Magnet Schools: New Opportunities in Science, Math, and the Arts," Public Education in Virginia, 20 no. 4 (Winter 1985), 4.

⁹⁴Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report, 1984-85, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1988, 5.

⁹⁵Shingleton and Griffin, 4.

Vocational Education

In addition to Competency-Based Education, the vocational counterpart of the Standards of Learning program, other significant transformations occurred in vocational education during the Robb years. In 1983 a Task Force on Vocational Education for Economic Growth was appointed to study Virginia's program of vocational education in light of changing technology. Made up of representatives of business, industry, education, and educationally related organizations, the task force was to make recommendations regarding future directions of vocational education.⁹⁶

The findings of the twenty-four member Task Force were presented to the board of education in January 1985. The report offered fifteen recommendations and suggestions for implementing them. The primary emphasis was to shift vocational education from "training for jobs" to "education for careers." Specific ideas included: (1) requiring high school graduates to demonstrate a mastery of general occupational competencies necessary for success in higher education and the workplace; (2) establishing a continuum process of career assessment and guidance, K-12; (3) enforcing Standards of Quality requirements that all high

⁹⁶Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, March 1984, xiii.

school graduates be competent to transfer smoothly from classroom to workplace; (4) requiring every high school to have a job placement coordinator; and (5) assisting localities with funding to establish high school programs in technology.⁹⁷

Rural School Effectiveness Project

The Rural School Effectiveness Project was initiated by Dr. Davis in March 1983 to improve the instructional capabilities of twenty-two of Virginia's smaller rural school divisions, most of which did not have personnel or research resources available to lead instructional improvement efforts. Teams of educators from the department and colleges and university personnel served as consultants to the localities in their efforts to apply the research on effective schools and teaching.⁹⁸ Periodic workshops were conducted by nationally known experts on educational research. These workshops were supplemented by visits to localities by the consultants.⁹⁹

⁹⁷Staff, "Revitalizing Vocational Education," Public Education in Virginia, 21 no. 1 (Spring 1985), 17.

⁹⁸Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, March 1984, xiii.

⁹⁹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1983-84, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1985, 5.

School-Industry Partnerships

A major focus by Dr. Davis, the state board, and the department during the Robb era were school-industry partnerships. Department suggestions included industry helping upgrade local education programs by providing the services of highly trained employers to schools and by making part-time work and research opportunities available to teachers and students. In return localities made school facilities available to industry for inservice training and fitness.¹⁰⁰

Technology Initiatives

Programs for technology included the establishment of a Technology Examination Center in the department of education to enable teachers and other educators to review computer hardware and software available for use in schools. An electronic network (V-NET) linked the department of education with school divisions and institutions of higher education for exchange of information by means of electronic mail, bulletin board, and software data base.¹⁰¹

Three programs were established in advanced technology.

¹⁰⁰Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, March 1984, xiv.

¹⁰¹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1983-84, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1985, 6.

One was Virginia's involvement in a national curriculum project to design a course called "Principles of Technology," which was offered to imbue training in a particular vocational area with an understanding of the principles of physics. A second was a master technician program in 1984-85 which combined a two-year high school course with a two-year community college course in electromechanical technology. The third was a three-year vocational research project to develop an experimental curriculum to integrate high-tech applications of math and science concepts into a pre-engineering program.¹⁰²

Home Education

Along with the many programs being implemented in the schools the state also wrestled with the question of parents educating their children at home. In July 1983 the state superintendent presented the state board a position paper on home teaching which gave an alternative to a home teacher being required to have a bachelor's degree.¹⁰³

At the December 1983 state board meeting, Dr. Davis expressed opposition to a provision in proposed home

¹⁰²Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1984-85, Department of Education, Richmond, April 1988, 6.

¹⁰³Board of Education, "Minutes, 1983," 54, 29 July 1983, 109.

teaching legislation before the General Assembly that would permit a child taught at home who also took courses in a public school to be dually enrolled and allow full average daily membership funds to flow to the locality. Davis requested and received permission to work with the legislature to oppose that component of the bill. Mr. Tulloch reported that the board's Public Relations and Review Committee also opposed the proposed legislation.¹⁰⁴

In January 1984 Dr. E. B. Howerton reported to the board on a work session dealing with House Bill 535, the home education bill. Delegate James Dillard and Senator John Chichester, patrons of the bill, and a representative of Home Educators of Virginia spoke for the bill, and a private school representative spoke in opposition. The bill defined home education "as not a private school." Board member W. L. Lemmon said that the bill was needed, because under some conditions home education was beneficial to a child. Because the state board was charged by the Constitution of Virginia with maintaining an education program of high quality, he favored state regulation. A motion by Lemmon that the board advise the General Assembly that it thought a bill was needed, that it agreed with the language that home education was not a private school, and

¹⁰⁴Board of Education, "Minutes, 1983," 54, 9 December 1983, 171.

that the board agreed there must be limitations on home schooling to ensure quality in education carried by a vote of seven to two.¹⁰⁵

The home schooling legislation which was approved by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Robb contained the following provisions for eligibility: (1) filing a notice in the division superintendent's office; (2) teaching the child by having (a) a baccalaureate degree, (b) a teaching certificate, (c) a correspondence course approved by the board of education, or (d) a program of study which included the state Standards of Learning objectives for language arts and mathematics for each child; and (3) providing evidence of educational achievement.¹⁰⁶

In May 1984 the state board required correspondence schools to be certified by the board of education in order to provide home instruction programs in Virginia.¹⁰⁷ Then in June the board approved a recommendation by its Curriculum and Instruction Committee that correspondence courses for home instruction could be offered only by a school meeting the definition of a correspondence school in

¹⁰⁵Board of Education, "Minutes, 1984," 55, 27 January 1984, 16-17.

¹⁰⁶Code of Virginia, 22.1-254.1.

¹⁰⁷Board of Education, "Minutes, 1984," 55, 31 May 1984, 79.

board regulations.¹⁰⁸ Henceforth, the board of education annually approved correspondence school curricula for home instruction.

Accountability

The Administrative Review Process

During the Robb administration the chief accountability measure was the administrative review process which had originated in the Dalton years during Dr. Campbell's state superintendency. The Program Audit Service centered in the Federal Programs Office of the department of education became the Administrative Review Service in 1979, a few months before S. John Davis became state superintendent. Barry S. Morris, the first director of the review service, drew upon his background in Fairfax County where he had earlier helped Davis devise a process for the evaluation of instruction and administration that had many features now in the state's new accountability measure.

When the Robb administration began, the department of education had had two full years of review experience and the process was basically complete. In 1982 the state defined the administrative review process as school divisions "getting report cards from the Department of

¹⁰⁸Board of Education, "Minutes, 1984," 55, 20 June 1984, 120.

Education on their successes and failures in meeting educational requirements." Director Morris said that the primary purpose of the administrative review was to determine whether school divisions were complying with various state and federal requirements applicable to education. He further noted that an announcement to a locality that a review was planned tended to generate interest in bringing about full implementation of the state's Standards of Quality and other programs. Such notice usually prompted a house-cleaning effort to bring records up-to-date, to sharpen procedures, and to correct any deficiencies.¹⁰⁹

By 1982-83 the administrative review process was set. School divisions were selected at random, and all divisions in the state were scheduled to be visited within a five year period. Between twenty-five and thirty school divisions were visited in any one school year. The on-site review teams verified compliance with quality and accreditation standards and monitored special education, vocational education, adult basic education, food service, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2. Surveys were administered to parents, students, and teachers to determine how they felt about

¹⁰⁹H. Hugh Moore, "Evaluating the Performance of Virginia School Divisions, "Public Education in Virginia, 17 no. 4 (Winter 1982), 4.

implementation of the Standards of Quality.¹¹⁰

At the local level the administrative review process began with an announcement in a Superintendent's Memo of the following year's schedule of divisions to host on-site review teams. A month before the scheduled visit, the division superintendent received a packet containing a brief description of the review process, an abbreviated schedule, a team roster, and a list of records needed for review from the staff member in the Administrative Review Service assigned to head the team.

The typical review was scheduled for four days. On day one all team members met for orientation and then met with the division superintendent, staff, and principals of schools to be visited to discuss procedures, make final schedule changes, and set appointments for interviews. The remainder of the first day was spent conducting central office and principal interviews and collecting data. Day two and day three were spent by the team visiting schools, reviewing records, conducting interviews, collecting data, and making classroom observations. By the afternoon of day three the team began consolidating and tabulating data and the initial drafting of the report, and the work continued

¹¹⁰Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1984, 27.

into the night. On day four the team met to complete program reports and turn in data collection instruments and tabulation forms. The final event was an exit meeting with the local division staff for a presentation of oral reports of review team findings.¹¹¹

The team was led by a coordinator, usually a supervisor from the Administrative Review Service. General education members from the department of education and from local school divisions were assigned to review quality and accreditation standards. Food service, vocational education, Chapter 1, special education, and adult education specialists from the state and local school divisions were named to monitor in their respective areas. A typical team for an average size school division of five to seven thousand students had eighteen to twenty members. Teams assigned to larger and smaller divisions were adjusted in size accordingly.¹¹²

Teachers were told that the administrative review would be conducted and brief observations would occur in some, but not all, classrooms in each of the schools visited. Observations lasted fifteen to twenty minutes; classrooms

¹¹¹Administrative Review Service, "Abbreviated Daily Schedule, Four Day Review," in files, Smyth County School Board, Marion, Virginia.

¹¹²Administrative Review Service, "Team Roster," in files Smyth County School Board Office, Marion, Virginia.

were randomly selected by members of the review team. Teachers were to have the following items available for the observer to see: grade book, lesson plan or objectives for the day, students' work files or projects, and the management system or individual student checklists or records of students' achievement of basic skills and competencies.¹¹³

Records needed for on-site review were listed. At the central office records ranging from the division's six-year plan, policy manual, and curriculum guides to test scores, enrollment figures, and latest audit of division and school funds--some seventy different records in all--were scrutinized. School records including the school's philosophy and objectives, master schedule, course offerings, principal's contract, inservice schedule, teaching certificates, random student cumulative records, and community interaction plan--more than ninety--were inspected. Chapter 1 had thirty different records required; food service, fifteen records; adult basic education, seventeen; special education, eighteen; and vocational

¹¹³Administrative Review Service, "Letter to Teacher," in files of Smyth County School Board Office, Marion, Virginia.

education, nineteen different records.¹¹⁴

A couple of weeks before the scheduled review, a detailed final schedule of activities and a final team roster were sent to the division superintendent. Instructions for citizen input, community leader interviews, a public hearing, and a news release which was to be sent to local media were also included. Interview response forms were also sent for local school personnel who would be interviewed.¹¹⁵

Local school divisions spent a great deal of time in the weeks and months before the review getting ready for the on-site visit. Staff members who had gone on reviews to other localities shared information that they had. Neighboring school divisions that had recently been through reviews were called, and copies of interviews and records needed were collected. As the review date drew closer, records were laid out in central offices and in schools. One memory of a review recalls the local division's school board meeting room filled with rows of tables piled high with stack after stack of records waiting in repose for the

¹¹⁴Administrative Review Service, "Records Needed for Review," in files Smyth County School Board Office, Marion, Virginia.

¹¹⁵Administrative Services Review, "Letter to Division Superintendent," in files of Smyth County School Board Office, Marion, Virginia.

on-site inspection.

Department of education philosophy was to make school divisions aware in advance of what was needed so that they could be well prepared. However, some department of education staff members enjoyed their power and liked to spring surprises on unsuspecting school division personnel. In general, however, most localities received good reports from the Administrative Review Service.

As the Administrative Review Service matured, it became more than it was originally intended, and it received a great deal of criticism. Dr. William H. Cochran, one of the founding fathers of the expanded administrative review, believed it was "an idea to help local superintendents by showing them that they were not meeting this or that requirement, but through the years it became more evaluative."¹¹⁶ Dr. Fred Bateman, long-time superintendent in Chesapeake and past president of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, expressed "frustration in that the administrative review team overregulated during those years."¹¹⁷ Dr. Joseph A. Spagnolo, Dr. Davis' successor as state superintendent, said that he "felt it was a burden"

¹¹⁶William H. Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹¹⁷C. Fred Bateman, telephone conversation, 5 February 1993.

and that he "preferred the results side of the issue."¹¹⁸ Frank E. Barham, long time executive director of the Virginia School Board Association, critiqued the review process as follows: "At times when Jack Davis was superintendent, there was an enforcer mode rather than an assistive mode in the department."¹¹⁹

By the end of the Robb administration the Administrative Review Service of the department of education and the review process that it oversaw had grown into a full-blown bureaucratic process. In the Baliles era to follow, significant changes would be made as to how the state would approach accountability at the local school division level.

Standards of Quality and Accountability

Along with the authority to prescribe Standards of Quality, granted under Article VIII, Section 2 of the Constitution of Virginia, the board of education has a responsibility to hold school divisions accountable for meeting the standards. The basic elements of the accountability process related to the Standards of Quality are: (1) The board of education assesses conditions and

¹¹⁸Joseph A. Spagnolo, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹¹⁹Frank E. Barham, telephone conversation with author, 26 January 1995.

identifies needs of public education in the Commonwealth.

(2) The board of education prescribes Standards of Quality subject to revision by the General Assembly. (3) The board of education determines the extent to which the standards are being met by localities and institutes corrective action when deficiencies are found. (4) The board of education reports annually to the Governor and General Assembly.

Beginning in 1870, the first superintendent of public instruction made annual reports on the condition of public education in the Commonwealth. The practice of presenting an annual report existed when the Standards of Quality era began. Previously known as The Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the format was changed in 1985 by Dr. S. John Davis, and the document was re-titled Superintendent's Annual Report. The annual report included enrollment and financial data.

To supplement the data in the Superintendent's Annual Report, additional data were collected and published in Facing Up for the specific purpose of identifying conditions and needs. Statistical data on such matters as pupil-teacher ratios, teachers' salaries, graduation rates, and achievement test scores were reported in this document.

A third document, Report on Public Education, originated with the emergence of the Standards of Quality to determine the extent to which the standards were being met

and for identifying school divisions that had failed to meet them. The last report under this title was prepared for the 1984-85 school year. Dr. Davis recommended blending this document into the Superintendents' Annual Report and Facing Up.¹²⁰

The State Testing Program

During the Robb era the state testing program continued to require educational ability and achievement testing at grades four, eight, and eleven. The Science Research Associates (SRA) Achievement Series, 1978 edition, was used for the first time in 1981-82 and then each year during the four-year Robb administration.

Table 9 shows the SRA test results in mean ability and achievement score percentiles for 1982-83 through 1985-86. In 1983-84 for the first time students in grades four, eight, and eleven scored above the national average in all subjects on SRA tests of achievement and ability. Gains that had been noted previously among fourth and eighth grade test scores extended to the high school level as eleventh grade scores moved above the fiftieth percentile in all subjects. In 1984-85, for the second consecutive year,

¹²⁰Richard Boyer, "Analysis Paper #7: Accountability and Standards of Quality," an unpublished draft, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, October 1994, 1-3.

Table 9

Percentile Ranks of Mean Ability and Achievement Scores for All Students in the State Testing Program, 1982-83 Through 1985-86

Grade	Test	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86
4	Educational Ability	52	55	56	58
	Achievement: Reading	53	56	57	58
	Mathematics	56	59	59	60
	Language Arts	56	59	60	62
8	Educational Ability	58	60	61	61
	Achievement: Reading	54	55	55	54
	Mathematics	66	68	68	67
	Language Arts	55	58	58	57
11	Educational Ability	55	58	62	63
	Achievement: Reading	54	56	58	59
	Mathematics	60	62	64	66
	Language Arts	55	56	58	59

Note: From Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, nos. 18 through 21, 1982-83 through 1985-86.

students in grades four, eight, and eleven scored above the national average in all subjects on the SRA test of achievement and ability, and in 1985-86, for the third consecutive year, students in grades four, eight, and eleven scored above the national average in all subjects.

Compared to scores in the last year of the Dalton administration, reading achievement scores increased in grade four from the forty-ninth percentile in 1981-82 to the fifty-eighth percentile in 1985-86, the last year of the Robb administration. In grade eight the corresponding gain in reading was from fifty-one to fifty-four, three percentile points; and in grade four the gain was from fifty-two to fifty-nine, seven percentile points.

In mathematics achievement the gain from 1981-82 to 1985-86 was seven percentile points--fifty-three to sixty--in grade four, three percentile points--sixty-four to sixty-seven--in grade eight, and eight percentile points--fifty-eight to sixty-six--in grade eleven. In language arts gains were nine percentile points--fifty-three to sixty-two--in grade four; four percentile points--fifty-three to fifty-seven--in grade eight; and six percentile points--fifty-three to fifty-nine--in grade eleven.

On the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Virginia students' scores also improved, ranking Virginia seventh among the twenty-two states who used the test in 1985. The

average total score of Virginia students who took the SAT at the end of the Robb administration in 1985-86 was 908. This total score exceeded the national average total score of 906.

The state score also represented seven-point gains on both the verbal and math sections of the SAT, exceeding national gains of five and four points respectively. The average verbal score for Virginia seniors of 435 was the highest since 1973-74. The average math score was 473, the highest since 1972-73. Approximately fifty percent of Virginia's seniors took the Scholastic Aptitude Test.¹²¹

Virginia students also showed up well on an additional test comparison. Dr. Davis agreed to have Virginia juniors take a test of reading proficiency administered by the Southern Regional Education Board and the National Assessment of Educational Progress. This test provided data for the first time showing how well a representative group of students from one state compared with similar groups from other states. Virginia, Florida, and Tennessee were the only southern states electing to participate in the testing project.

Virginia's juniors were high scorers at every level of

¹²¹Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report 1984-85, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, April 1988, 7.

competition. With a mean score of 298.4 they outdistanced Florida's and Tennessee's students whose comparable scores were 292.1 and 291.2 respectively. Scores for each of the three states surpassed the national mean of 289.3 and the regional mean of 287.3 recorded for a twelve-state Southeast area including the three states.

"These scores," Dr. Davis said, "show that Virginia students are achieving well in reading, study skills, and in the ability to understand and interpret material they read. The scores confirm the above-average reading achievement scores of Virginia students on SRA tests given in recent years."¹²²

With Virginia's Design for Learning implemented; with enrollments increasing rapidly in advanced courses in math, science, and foreign language; with improved drop-out rates; with more high school graduates continuing their education; and with the number of students in specialized programs like gifted education growing, Virginia appeared to be making educational gains under Dr. Davis' leadership. With teachers' salaries up, with new certification standards for teachers, and with assessment and testing requirements in place for new teachers, Virginia had made strides in

¹²²Staff, "Virginia Students Outperform Competition on Two Major Tests," Public Education in Virginia, 21 no. 3 (Fall 1985), 4.

strengthening its teaching corps. As test scores also showed gains, the Robb administration had a great deal of ammunition to use in making its case for having been accountable to the citizens of Virginia.

Management

The first two and one-half years of S. John Davis' state superintendency were relatively stable for top management in the department of education. The department's organizational framework and key personnel were retained from the previous administration. Dr. Davis established his management approach to include team building, delegating, keeping the focus, organizing, and communicating. Emphasizing his personal style, he entertained key staff members in his home.¹²³ The years of the Robb administration have been described as "golden" years for public education and for Dr. Davis; and while management reflected the overall success of the era, some signs of discord did appear among personnel in the department by 1985.

Department Organization

During the Robb era, 1982-86, the organization of the

¹²³William C. Bosher, personal interview with author, 19 August 1994.

department that Dr. Davis had continued from Dr. Campbell underwent little change. The top staff configuration of a deputy superintendent and four assistant superintendents continued. However, the first change in personnel among Davis' cabinet level staff caused a change in certain titles. Myron E. Cale was brought from Fairfax County to take F. Brent Sandidge's place as assistant superintendent for administration and finance. Cale had been an associate superintendent in Fairfax County and insisted on the title of associate superintendent in Richmond.¹²⁴ The other assistant superintendents' titles were then raised to associates.¹²⁵

Later, Dr. Davis began discussing reorganization at the deputy superintendent level. Instead of one deputy, he decided he wanted two deputy superintendents. In 1985 he made the change and designated a deputy superintendent for administration, assessment and field services and a deputy superintendent for curriculum, instruction and personnel services.¹²⁶ One position of associate superintendent for

¹²⁴Richard L. Boyer, personal interview with author, 26 September 1994.

¹²⁵Virginia Educational Directory, School Year 1982-83, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1983, 4.

¹²⁶Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

financial and support services and two positions of assistant superintendent, one for curriculum and instruction and one for personnel services, were also in Davis' cabinet.

Department Personnel

With only one change in top department of education staff in the Dalton years, Dr. Davis moved more slowly than expected in placing his own people in cabinet-level positions. During the Robb era several more changes occurred which significantly reconfigured Davis' key advisors in the department.

The next upper echelon staff member to leave was Dr. Richard L. Boyer, the associate superintendent for planning and evaluation. Dr. Davis announced Dr. Boyer's resignation at the July 29, 1982, meeting of the board of education.¹²⁷ Dr. Boyer accepted a position as an assistant superintendent in Henrico County, joining Division Superintendent William C. Bosher, who himself had left the department in 1981. Dr. Boyer changed positions because he wanted to return to the local school division level. He had become convinced that if meaningful change were to occur in public education it would be at the local level, not the state level.¹²⁸

¹²⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1982," 53, 29 July 1982, 135.

¹²⁸Boyer, interview, 26 September 1994.

With Dr. Boyer's resignation, his position remained vacant for some time. Then Dr. Davis appointed Barry S. Morris to be the administrative director in charge of planning and evaluation (not an associate or assistant superintendent), moving Morris from his previous position as director of the administrative review service in the department. Planning and evaluation was assigned to the domain of the associate superintendent for curriculum and instruction.¹²⁹

The next three years were stable, and then in 1985 major upheavals in top staff occurred. Early in 1985 Dr. Carl L. Riehm resigned as associate superintendent for curriculum and instruction. The Riehm departure signaled some dissatisfaction in the department over Jack Davis' management.¹³⁰ Dr. Riehm was in charge of instruction; however, Callie Shingleton, a director under Riehm, slowly gained Jack's confidence and correspondingly grew in power. Dr. Riehm decided that he had to leave the department, when in a staff meeting Dr. Davis gave him an assignment and then told him to check with Dr. Shingleton on the topic in question. Riehm interpreted Davis' action as circumventing

¹²⁹Virginia Educational Directory, School Year 1983-84, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, January 1984, 12.

¹³⁰Smith, interview, 4 February 1994.

the chain of command in a manner that was harmful to morale. Dr. Riehm believed that he no longer had control over personnel under his supervision. He also thought that Dr. Davis was pushing him toward resigning.¹³¹

In May 1985 Dr. Davis informed the board of education that Dr. William H. Cochran would be resigning as deputy superintendent of public instruction effective September 1, 1985.¹³² Dr. Cochran had been deputy superintendent under three state superintendents and served as acting superintendent of public instruction after Dr. Campbell's retirement before Dr. Davis took office. However, as time went by under Dr. Davis' management of the department, Dr. Cochran began to feel that Davis had other people he felt closer to and turned to more. He saw Ben Howerton become a larger part of the legislative workings, Mike Cale take over as the chief financial advisor, and Callie Shingleton emerge as a power in instruction. With Boyer and now Riehm gone, Cochran was all that was left of the "old guard." When Dr. Davis began talking about reorganizing the department and having more than one deputy superintendent, Dr. Cochran decided to retire. He also saw decisions being made that he

¹³¹Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994 and Boyer, interview, 26 September 1994.

¹³²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1985," 56, May 1985, 56.

was not a party to or did not agree to. He was having to explain actions that he had not helped develop and with which he did not agree.¹³³

Dr. Davis' replacements for Riehm and Cochran cemented his top staff positions with people of his own choice. As expected, Dr. Callie P. Shingleton was named assistant (not associate) superintendent for curriculum and instruction to succeed Dr. Riehm.¹³⁴ Dr. William J. Burkholder, one of Dr. Davis' former associates and his successor as division superintendent in Fairfax County, was hired to replace Dr. Cochran as a deputy superintendent.¹³⁵ Dr. Everett B. Howerton, Jr., was also named a deputy superintendent. Dr. M. Kenneth Magill was promoted to administrative director of assessment and evaluation, and Mrs. Winifred C. Mahony was named to succeed Dr. Shingleton as administrative director of general education.¹³⁶

The number of personnel in the department of education was cut in the 1982-84 biennial budget. With 466 full-time positions available in the 1981-82 fiscal year, Dr. Davis

¹³³Cochran, interview, 7 January 1994.

¹³⁴Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1985," 54, 24 September 1985, 96.

¹³⁵Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1985," 54, 1 November 1985, 116.

¹³⁶Virginia Educational Directory 1987, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia 1987, 5-8.

faced a 6.8 percent reduction of staff in 1982-83 and an additional 1.6 percent reduction in 1983-84. The 466 positions dropped to 434 full-time positions in 1982-83 and to 427 in 1983-84. The final two years of the Robb administration saw staff positions remain virtually the same with 427 full-time equivalents in 1984-85 and 428 in 1985-86.¹³⁷

Dr. Davis spoke to the women of the department of education in 1982 and told of the concern in state government about the need for more women in administrative and supervisory positions. He pledged that department of education jobs would be open to all who qualified regardless of sex or race. He then quoted from a study done for the department by the School of Education at the University of Virginia. According to the University of Virginia study, in 1980-81 there were 254 high school principals in the state--eleven, or four percent, were women; there were 178 junior high or middle school principals--fourteen, or eight percent, women; and there were 1,150 elementary school principals--323, or twenty-eight percent, women. Davis told the assembled women that he was "confident in the future more and more opportunities in administrative and

¹³⁷"Historical M.E.L. Overview," an unpublished document in the files of the office of Financial Services, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 5 February 1994, 1.

supervisory positions will be available to women."¹³⁸ No mention was made of the number of women in department of education leadership positions, nor was a count of minority staff presented.

A review of individuals filling the so-called cabinet-level positions in the department--deputy, associate, and assistant superintendents and administrative directors--during the Robb years reveals that white males dominated the top echelon of management. Neither women nor minorities held any of the four superintendent-level titles from 1982-86. There were three white males in the three administrator directorships in 1982-83. The rest of the era saw four, and then five, white males and one white female in the five, and then six administrative directors' jobs. No minority person, male or female, held any of the top director-level assignments.¹³⁹

The Secretary and the Department

The first secretaries of education tended to be low-profile, especially in K-12 public education. Most, like Dr. J. Wade Gilley, Governor Dalton's secretary of

¹³⁸S. John Davis, "Speech to Women of the Department of Education," no date, filed in 1982 speeches, Davis' private papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

¹³⁹Virginia Educational Directory (1982-83 to 1985-86), Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia.

education, concentrated on higher education and left the public schools to the superintendent of public instruction. However, Governor Robb's education secretary, Dr. John T. Casteen, III, maintained a higher profile in the public schools. Dr. Casteen actively took the lead in numerous department of education programs for grades K-12. In the resolution passed by the board of education on the occasion of Dr. Casteen's resigning to accept the presidency of the University of Connecticut in the final months of the Robb administration, Dr. Casteen was acknowledged as a scholarly, articulate spokesman for public education and recognized for his effective leadership for the Governor's Center for Innovation and Technology and other innovative projects. He was also praised for his leadership in seeking increased funding for public education and higher education standards for those entering the teaching profession.¹⁴⁰

Dr. Casteen was more directly involved than his predecessors in the work of the department. An example of his involvement is seen in the guidance publications that the department developed in 1984. The project was initiated by the secretary of education, and the department of education was assigned the responsibility of carrying out the project. Dr. Casteen stated in a DOE publication:

¹⁴⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1985," 54, 24 September 1985, 97. 1985,

The Tayloe Murphy Institute studies in 1980 and 1981 suggest that large numbers of students were missing out on important courses.... At that time, 1981-82, school guidance counselors were asking for a more systematic approach to guidance, especially for guidance publications related to the real world. Meetings with parents told us they felt left out of education and career guidance. At this point a teacher in Crewe sent us some French public school guidance materials; we thought it had potential.... In the new guidance series, we wanted a serious discussion of serious questions of interest to lay people.¹⁴¹

The project published five sequential booklets, three related activity guides, and a wall chart under the overall theme and title of "Educational Opportunities in Virginia."

With a secretary participating in many department activities and a governor actively interested in projects like the model high school at Varina and the magnet schools for science and technology, the superintendent of public instruction had to balance administration demands with staff initiatives. Coupled to the challenges of working with a proactive administration was the reality of a state superintendent having to take care of politics with the challenge of reappointment hovering in the background. The Baliles years just ahead would illustrate the complexities of the state superintendent's job as a new administration set its own agenda for public education.

¹⁴¹Staff, "Publications Help Students and Parents Make Educational, Career Choices," Public Education in Virginia, 20 no. 3 (Fall 1984), 5.

Summary

Governor Charles S. Robb readily reappointed S. John Davis to the state superintendent's post. The Robb years are often referred to as "golden years" for public education in Virginia and for Superintendent Davis. With a supportive governor and Secretary of Education John T. Casteen, III, working in harmony with Davis and the Virginia Board of Education, a great deal of emphasis was placed on public education in the state capitol.

A strong economy gave the Robb administration increasingly large sums of new money to spend on education. Funding fully the state's Standards of Quality and raising teachers' salaries nearer to the national average became the two primary funding goals.

Interest in educational reform in the early 1980s spawned a plethora of commissions and task forces created to improve public education in Virginia. Major initiatives created the Standards of Learning and Competency-Based Education. Accreditation standards and teacher certification requirements were made stricter. Model schools, magnet schools, school-industry partnerships, and technology initiatives were launched.

The Administrative Review Process was expanded to become the state's chief accountability measure. SRA test results, SAT scores, and SREB regional testing showed that

Virginia students had made gains in test results since the late 1970s and that Virginia students' scores compared favorably with other states.

Dr. Davis slowly began to reorganize the department of education and to appoint his own people in cabinet-level positions. Davis' management approach continued to include team building, consulting, delegating, communicating, and emphasizing his own personality. However, some signs of discord appeared in the department.

Chapter 5

THE BALILES YEARS, 1986-1990

Politics

The Governor

The gubernatorial campaign in 1985 featured education as a key issue. Democrat Gerald L. Baliles supported Governor Charles S. Robb's espousal of the importance of education for economic development, argued for additional funding for education, and sought the support of Virginia's teachers. Baliles' campaign advertising featured ten commitments for education:

(1) for teacher salaries at least equal to the national average, (2) against merit pay, (3) for a statewide elementary guidance program, (4) for full funding for educational "standards of quality," (5) for achieving effective pupil teacher ratios, (6) for state "ear-marking" of local salary increases, (7) for the fairness of and the passage of the ERA, (8) against reductions in VRS benefits for those currently enrolled, (9) for the literacy and achievement standards that can make Virginia a national symbol for quality, (10) for increased programs between universities and public schools and for expanded vocational training.¹

Baliles conveyed the image of a fiscally conservative but progressive Democrat running the state. In July, during what was later described as a pivotal debate by political

¹"Advertisement," Virginia Journal of Education, March 1985, ii.

pundits, Republican Wyatt Durrette suggested that education would have to compete with other state needs for budget dollars. Baliles said that he would give education top priority and agreed to support Robb's plan to provide all of the state's share of the money needed for local schools to comply with the Standards of Quality. Durrette tried to recover later with an eighteen point position paper on education, but polls late in the campaign suggested that voters gave Baliles a clear edge as the candidate best able to improve education.²

Election day 1985 brought Democrats their second consecutive sweep of the three statewide offices. Gerald Baliles won over Wyatt Durrette with 55.2 percent of the vote. L. Douglas Wilder, the first successful black candidate in modern times, beat Republican John Chichester to win the lieutenant governorship with 51.8 percent of the vote. Mary Sue Terry attracted broad electoral coalition support in her bid for attorney general over Republican candidate William "Buster" O'Brien by taking 61.4 percent of the vote. The Democratic victory was built on strong support from the young, from blacks, and to a lesser degree

²Dale Eisman, "Baliles, Wilder, Ms. Terry Elected as Democrats Post Historic Victory," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 6 November 1985, A-1.

from women. The 1985 Virginia election, which will be long remembered for the election of the first black and first woman to statewide office, signalled the political moderation of the state and the emergence of Virginia as a leader in the New South.³

In his inaugural address Governor Baliles reaffirmed his belief in fiscal responsibility by controlling spending without "sapping the spirit of change and progress" and by containing the size of government without "diminishing the scope and opportunity" of government. He further pledged:

We are a new dominion, abiding values, yet ready to lead the way into a new decade, a new century, and a new economy. The new dominion will lead in education. We will fully fund the standards of quality in our schools. We must seek and recruit the best teachers for our children.⁴

Then in his state-of-the-state message to the General Assembly he made it clear that transportation and education would be his two primary focal points. He unveiled a bond proposal which would pump significant new money into the state's transportation system.

³Larry Sabato, "The 1985 Election in Virginia: History Quietly Writ Large," Newsletter, Institute of Government, University of Virginia, January 1986, 1.

⁴"Baliles Sketches a Broad Outline for 'New Dominion' in His address," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 12 January 1986, A-15.

In public education he made it clear that he supported both the teacher salary increases and the salary mandate recommended by Governor Robb. He affirmed this by saying:

Each is essential if we are to achieve the national average for Virginia teacher salaries within the next four years. I will be the chief advocate for quality public education.

I have directed the Secretary of Education to visit each school division; I personally will visit Virginia classrooms, attend local school board meetings and carry our united commitment to a quality education system.

I will ask the Board of Education to draft the blueprint that will place Virginia in the first rank of education systems in this nation."⁵

Governor Baliles also strongly commended to the legislature the board of education's proposed standard to strengthen guidance and counseling in Virginia's elementary schools. He accepted the Joint Legislative and Review Committee's (JLARC) findings that an additional position per 1,000 students could be provided for elementary guidance within the 376 million dollars for education that Governor Robb had recommended in the 1986-88 budget. Furthermore, he counselled that in schools where guidance is provided in lower grades, learning and test scores improve.⁶

⁵Governor Gerald Baliles, "Inaugural Address to the General Assembly of Virginia," 13 January 1986, 1.

⁶Ibid.

The Secretary of Education

Governor Gerald Baliles' process for selecting a person to be his secretary of education began and ended with the incumbent of five months, Donald J. Finley. Finley had been named to the governor's cabinet when John T. Casteen, III, resigned in August 1985 to become president of the University of Connecticut. Finley originally came to the attention of then Lieutenant Governor Charles S. Robb and then Delegate Gerald L. Baliles when he was in charge of financial analysis for K-12 education for the House Appropriations Committee. Governor Robb named him deputy secretary of finance when he became governor. Robb then moved Dr. Finley to the education post in his cabinet when Casteen resigned five months before the end of the Robb administration. Robb encouraged Baliles to keep Finley on in his administration.

Don Finley's reputation and obvious strength as a "number cruncher" met both Robb's and Baliles' needs in a secretary of education. The JLARC studies, substantial financial changes, funding formula reworking, and the major initiative to increase teachers' salaries to the national average made the appointment of a technocrat logical. By Christmas of 1985 Governor-elect Baliles had interviewed Finley and appointed him to a four-year term as secretary of education. Finley and Baliles were "soulmates in

organizational and education philosophy" and believed in the "efficiency of goal setting and keeping score."⁷

Baliles and Finley were committed to continuing Robb's educational agenda and adding to it. They also redefined the working relationship between the state board, the state superintendent, the department of education, and the administration.

The cabinet position for education in Virginia is a somewhat unusual position. The superintendent of public instruction and the state board both have constitutional duties. The governor's cabinet level position of secretary of education is not mentioned in Virginia's constitution, and the secretary is only as strong as the governor decides to allow him to be. Donald Finley became the strongest secretary of education to date and helped redefine how the administration and the traditional state educational hierarchy worked.⁸

There was also some speculation that a power struggle on educational governance between Dr. Davis and Dr. Finley in their respective positions may have played an internal role in the administration. This speculation became a topic

⁷Donald J. Finley, interview with author, 28 April 1994.

⁸W. L. Lemmon, interview with author, 18 January 1993.

of discussion at the June 3, 1986, meeting of the Structure and Organization Committee of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education. At this meeting Senator Adelard Brault asked Dr. Davis if he thought that clarification was needed in roles of the state superintendent, state board, and the secretary of education. He also asked Dr. Finley if he felt that clarification was needed in the constitutional and statutory definition of the same three entities. Both Davis and Finley responded that they did not see the need for clarification. Finley noted, "It may be more a matter of communication than clarification."⁹

The Reappointment

As the new administration of Governor-elect Gerald L. Baliles began to take shape, it soon became evident that S. John Davis' fate as state superintendent was not as clear as it had been when Governor-elect Robb began naming top officials in his administration. Secretary of Education Finley was named by early January, and by mid-January David L. Temple, Jr., a former black Democratic office holder and ironically the principal of the S. John Davis Center School

⁹Maynard K. Bean, Factors That Affected the 1986 Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education. (Ed. D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, October 1990), 192.

in Fairfax County, had been named deputy secretary of education.¹⁰

As the Baliles administration began preparations for taking office, Jack Davis was asked to put together organizational charts of the department and to draw up educational priorities for the governor-elect. Dr. Davis had two meetings with Baliles during this period.¹¹ However, months went by and Davis continued as superintendent awaiting an announcement from the governor as to his fate.

"As Davis wasn't reappointed and wasn't reappointed, he had his antenna out. Various rumors floated around the department about the reappointment,"¹² said Dr. Emmett Shufflebarger, a long-time department staffer who headed the Radford regional office. Shufflebarger asked Dr. Davis, "Has this [the delay in reappointment] bothered you?" Davis replied, "No, but it bothers my family." Dr. Shufflebarger

¹⁰Michael Hardy, "Baliles Reappoints Vassar as Head of Parole Board," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 11 January 1986, B-2.

¹¹S. John Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

¹²Emmett Shufflebarger, interview, 3 March 1993.

felt that it was obvious that it hurt Jack.¹³

Why was Dr. Davis not reappointed sooner? Governor Baliles responded to reporters' questions about the delay in Davis' reappointment by explaining that he was adhering to his own decision-making schedule. Baliles noted that he had spent several months examining the department of education's structure as well as discussing educational issues and priorities. "Dr. Davis' reappointment came," he said, "When I got to the point where I was comfortable."¹⁴

Governor Baliles reappointed Dr. Davis because he concluded that he could implement the educational program that the administration was planning, that he could work with the General Assembly and school people, that he could work with Republicans and Democrats, and that he could work with local government officials. Baliles decided that Davis could anticipate legal and administrative problems or when confronted with such problems could handle them.¹⁵

The governor, in appointments as in programs, liked to keep score. He had interviews with all agency heads.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Michael Hardy, "Dr. Davis Is Renamed Schools' Chief," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 March 1986, A-1.

¹⁵Gerald L. Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

Davis' interview was a late night one and proved to be somewhat of an endurance test. "There were a number of questions raised about Davis in the interview process," said Baliles.¹⁶

Secretary of Education Donald Finley has noted that Governor Baliles did not make a decision until he was certain of every aspect and every pro and con was settled in his mind. In the selection process for agency heads, an important meeting occurred in which the agency head came before the governor and key staff members and did a "show and tell" and then responded to questions. Finley said, "Davis' session was weak; he misread Baliles to some extent. Also, the department of education then did not have a reputation for being well run. Governor Baliles had a strong management focus approach and believed that things were not getting done well in the department."¹⁷ Thus, the governor had serious reservations about Davis' reappointment.

W. L. "Bill" Lemmon, an administration insider, has indicated that Baliles delayed so long before appointing Davis because in the interview with Baliles Davis was not

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

well prepared. Baliles, an administrator with tremendous knowledge and an inordinate grasp for detail, asked such comprehensive questions that Davis could not answer them satisfactorily. Davis apparently misread Baliles. He wanted to appear "lean and mean," spent a great deal of time talking about downsizing the school for the blind at Waynesboro, and did not show the vision that Baliles was looking for in a state superintendent.¹⁸

While Baliles hesitated, no other strong candidate emerged, and Davis continued in his job somewhat like an ambassador without portfolio. Rumors as to reasons for Davis' nonappointment circled the department. Reporters speculated that Baliles was less than impressed with Davis' stewardship, especially the superintendent's dispute with JLARC over the amount of money needed to fund fully the Standards of Quality.¹⁹

At the board of education level word was that one member of the state board, who had access to Governor Baliles that others on the state board did not have, was after Davis and had got Baliles to ask Dr. Davis certain

¹⁸Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

¹⁹Hardy, "Dr. Davis Is Renamed Schools Chief," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 March 1986, A-1.

questions that he could not handle well.²⁰

At the department level rumors circulated that Dr. Davis had been told to get rid of Mike Cale, Callie Shingleton, and Ben Howerton, or he would not be reappointed.²¹ Davis, however, remained loyal to these three trusted aides, and criticism from "old guard" staff and some division superintendents did not appear to influence the reappointment process.

In the final analysis two factors led to Dr. Davis' reappointment. First, Davis had strong support from members of the General Assembly who were legislative leaders in the governor's own party. In particular, Senator Al Smith of Petersburg and Senator Ed Willey of Richmond lobbied with the governor for Davis' appointment.²² Secondly, Governor Baliles and Secretary Finley had put together the Commission on Excellence in Education and had to have a superintendent of public instruction on the job. No candidate stronger than Davis had emerged, so Davis was reappointed.²³ It was

²⁰Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

²¹Emmett G. Shufflebarger, interview, 3 March 1993.

²²Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

²³Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

no mere coincidence that Dr. Davis' reappointment was announced simultaneously with the public announcement of the formation of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education, which was designed to develop a plan to make Virginia one of the top ten states in the country educationally. In a sense Dr. Davis was "too strong to dump" as one unnamed government source suggested.²⁴

Among knowledgeable political circles the scuttlebutt abounded that Governor-elect Baliles believed that he knew agency heads well and that he intended to find the best people possible for his cabinet. He had already made up his mind when he began the appointive process that S. Mason Carbaugh, agriculture commissioner, and S. John Davis, state superintendent of public instruction, would not be reappointed. However, when his deliberations were completed, political factors caused him to take the path of least resistance; hence the reappointment of both Carbaugh and Davis.²⁵

The Executive Branch

Unlike the Robb years, the Baliles years had as much

²⁴Hardy, "Dr. Davis Is Renamed Schools Chief," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 March 1986, A-1.

²⁵Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

shadow as sunshine for S. John Davis as he worked with the executive branch. The relationship between Davis and Robb had been "close, positive, and supportive";²⁶ however, the Baliles-Davis relationship was "not close, but cordial, and professional."²⁷ The two men had had little personal contact, and when Baliles was attorney general the association was "little except through lawyers in the attorney general's office working with the superintendent and the department."²⁸

Dr. Davis and his top staff members at the department of education met with Governor Baliles only four or five times during his four years in office.²⁹ The executive branch's primary association with Davis and the department was through Secretary of Education Finley and his staff.

The partnership between Secretary Finley and Dr. Davis often revolved around the central issue of control of public education in the Commonwealth. Whereas the previous administration had presented a united Robb-Casteen-Davis agenda for public education, the Baliles-Finley agenda did not always include the state superintendent, the state

²⁶Robb, interview, 28 April 1994.

²⁷Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

department, and the state board as full partners. In financial and budgetary matters and in the development of an accountability model, Secretary Finley would control the administration's response. In instructional matters, especially in the implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education and the Family Life Education Program, Dr. Davis, his staff in the department, and the state board would take the lead. This significant shift in the control of public education would dominate the executive branch throughout the Baliles years.

The Legislative Branch

S. John Davis' working relationship with the General Assembly during the Baliles administration continued much as it had in the Dalton and Robb eras. Davis and Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., continued working closely with legislators, testifying before committees as the need arose, and holding one-on-one strategy sessions to advance or stop educational legislature. Davis and Howerton were particularly effective in developing and explaining the potentially explosive Family Life Education bill as it made its way through the General Assembly. Even though the legislative body had requested the program, its members were willing to let Dr. Davis, the department, and the state board carry out the

difficult task of creating such a program.³⁰

In particular, Dr. Davis benefited from his close ties to powerful senior members of the legislature. He was "very close to Ed Willey, Hunter Andrews, and Dick Bagley. A. L. Philpott, speaker of the House of Delegates, thought highly of Jack Davis."³¹ If these senior legislators had a problem or perceived a problem, it was Jack Davis' job to help.³²

The Board of Education

Throughout the Baliles years Dr. Davis' relationship with the state board remained as strong as it had been in the previous two gubernatorial administrations. Davis did push his own viewpoint, but he also deferred to the board at times as he was more inclined to cooperate than not. Davis continued to keep the board well informed, was proactive, and wanted the board to be so.³³

The major change in the working relationship with the board was the increased frequency of times that the

³⁰Finley, interview, 28 April 1994, and Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

³¹David K. McCloud, telephone conversation, 28 January 1995.

³²S. John Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

³³Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

secretary of education appeared before the board of education to brief members on important educational issues. The administration's most important educational program initiatives were brought to the board by Secretary Finley, not Dr. Davis. For example, on February 26, 1986, one month into the new administration Secretary Finley gave board members suggestions for the implementation of an elementary guidance program statewide as "required by Governor Baliles."³⁴ Then in December Dr. Finley distributed a letter from Governor Baliles to Board President Lemmon and noted that the "essence of this letter is that all recommendations of the Report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education are to be pursued by the board as soon as possible."³⁵

However, the most significant board meeting appearance by Dr. Finley came in January 1988 when he gave a detailed report on the governor's 1988-90 proposed budget for public education.³⁶ This was the first time that the state board had not proposed a budget for K-12 education first. However, according to Mr. Lemmon, the president of the board, the board "could not fight Governor Baliles over who

³⁴Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 26 February 1986, 19.

³⁵Ibid., 12 December 1986, 90.

³⁶Ibid., 59 15 January 1988, 8.

proposed the education budget because K-12 got bigger increases than the colleges."³⁷

The Virginia Board of Education was led by W. L. Lemmon of Marion and Robert H. Deford, Jr., of Virginia Beach during the Baliles years. Each man served as president for two years. Margaret S. Marston of Arlington and Francis A. Lewis of Richmond both served two-year terms as vice-president. Significant newcomers to the board were James W. Dyke, Jr., of Keswick, who became secretary of education in the Wilder administration that followed the Baliles years; Timothy J. Sullivan of Williamsburg, a member of Baliles' "Kitchen Cabinet" and later president of the College of William and Mary; and Dr. Thomas L. Gorsuch of Waynesboro, who later played a lead role in Governor Wilder's Commission on Equal Educational Opportunities for all Virginians. Table 10 gives the members of the board of education during the administration of Governor Baliles.

Education Interest Groups

During the Baliles years Jack Davis worked to keep the channels of communication open with all stakeholders in education. He worked cooperatively with the leadership of the Virginia Education Association, the Virginia Parent and

³⁷Lemmon, interview, 18 January 1993.

Table 10

Board of Education Members During the Baliles Administration

Member	1986	1987	1988	1989
W. L. Lemmon Marion, Businessman	a	a	x	x
Margaret S. Marston Arlington, Civic Leader	c	c		
Adelard L. Brault Fairfax, Lawyer	x	x	x	
Robert H. DeFord, Jr. Virginia Beach, Professor	x	x	b	b
James W. Dyke, Jr. Keswick, Lawyer	x	x	x	x
Francis A. Lewis Richmond, Best Products	x	x	d	d
Suzanne F. Thomas Alexandria, Civic Leader	x	x	x	x
Sandra A. Vaughan Petersburg, Lawyer	x	x	x	x
Kenneth S. White Lynchburg, Lawyer	x	x		
Lewis M. Nelson, Jr. Roanoke, Businessman			x	x
Timothy J. Sullivan Williamsburg, Professor			x	x
Thomas L. Gorsuch Waynesboro, Physician				x

a President in 1986 and 1987

b President in 1988 and 1989

c Vice-President in 1986 and 1987

d Vice-President in 1988 and 1989

Teachers Association, the League of Women Voters, the Virginia School Boards Association, the Virginia Association of School Administrators, the various principals' associations, and such other statewide organizations as the Virginia Chamber of Commerce to gain support for education. The organizations tended to believe that Davis' public relations approach was good, that he was even-handed in handling issues, and that he was good at building consensus and getting interest groups behind the issues he advocated.³⁸

Dr. Davis continued to work closely with the largest education interest group, the Virginia Education Association (VEA). He was supportive of salary increases for teachers, he listened to the VEA's positions, and he made certain the VEA was represented on most study groups and committees. Therefore, the VEA strongly supported Davis.³⁹

Although Davis maintained a good relationship with the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) and communicated well with that organization, the VSBA was not always in agreement with Davis on important issues. The VSBA objected to salary mandates and wanted the amounts of increases in pay for teachers left to the discretion of localities. VSBA

³⁸Ralph J. Shotwell, interview, 13 January 1995.

³⁹Brenda Cloyd, personal interview, Richmond, Virginia, 13 January 1995.

also opposed literacy passport testing because its leadership believed it was more showmanship than substance. Yet, the VSBA believed that Davis did much to improve education in the Commonwealth.⁴⁰

Funding

The administrations of Governors Robb and Baliles brought about major new expenditures of state money for public education. Several factors combined fortuitously to bring about this increase in funding: (1) a robust economy which made new dollars available, (2) a persistent concern that the Standards of Quality (SOQ) were not being funded fully by the state, and (3) two pro-education governors elected after strong campaign promises to make K-12 education a top priority in their administrations.

In 1971 citizens of Virginia had made a strong commitment to public education when they adopted overwhelmingly a revised state constitution. Governor Linwood Holton appointed a state task force which established the foundation cost of implementing the Standards of Quality and developed a new basic aid formula for funding the standards.

A 1973 attorney general's opinion gave guidance to the

⁴⁰Frank Barham, telephone conversation, 24 January 1995.

General Assembly with two considerations: (1) The standards cannot be prescribed in a vacuum but must be realistic in relation to current educational needs and practices in the state. (2) The General Assembly should take into account the actual salaries being expended by local school divisions and the actual pupil to teacher ratio existing within the school divisions in estimating the cost of the Standards of Quality.⁴¹

Throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s the education establishment in Virginia agreed that the General Assembly and the administration underfunded the standards. The board of education, the department of education, the Virginia Education Association, local governing bodies, local school boards, and division superintendents consistently lobbied for full funding of the Standards of Quality.

When S. John Davis became superintendent of public instruction, he and the state board discussed this issue and used the rationale that they favored in budget requests to the Dalton and Robb administrations. Two major concerns were raised by Dr. Davis and those in public education allied with him and the Virginia Board of Education: (1) Unrealistic assumptions for instructional salaries were

⁴¹VEA Prescription for Funding A System of High Quality Education in the Commonwealth, Richmond, Virginia Education Association, June 1993, 1.

being used to underestimate the guaranteed Standards of Quality per pupil expenditures. (2) The state did not fund a realistic number of instructional positions needed to implement the Standards of Quality.⁴²

Because of the questions raised about the funding of public education, the 1982 General Assembly called for a review and analysis of funding of the Standards of Quality. The next year a joint subcommittee expressed concern over funding of the standards and recommended that the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) assess the method for estimating SOQ costs.⁴³

Two phases of study were conducted by JLARC. The first dealt with the costs of implementing the existing standards, and the second studied the equity of distribution of state assistance to the school divisions. The first study was released in February 1986, and the second report was completed in November 1987. Both studies had major implications for the funding of public education during the Baliles administration.

⁴²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1983," 54, 24 June 1983, 87.

⁴³Virginia General Assembly, Report of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission on Funding the Standards of Quality, Part I: Assessing SOQ Costs, Senate Document no. 20 (Richmond, 1986), iii.

JLARC I: Assessing SOQ Costs

JLARC I was chaired by Senator Edward E. Willey, and Delegate Theodore V. Morrison, Jr., served as the vice chairman. Three additional senators, six more delegates, and the Auditor of Public Accounts for the Commonwealth made up JLARC's voting membership.⁴⁴ However, the bulk of the work of the group was assigned to the JLARC staff directed by Philip A. Leone. The staffs of the Senate Finance Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, the department of education, and the department of planning and budget also assisted.⁴⁵

Staff methodology for estimating the costs of the Standards of Quality involved two major parts: First, because quantified standards existed for instructional staffing requirements, the standards were applied to school enrollment data to calculate positions necessary in each school division. Previously, the number of positions required by the Standards of Quality was calculated by dividing statewide pupil enrollment by the quantified standards. However, a limitation of the statewide calculation was that all classrooms cannot be filled to the maximum size permitted by the standards. Therefore, the

⁴⁴Ibid., ii.

⁴⁵Ibid., iii.

commission's staff applied the standards to pupil membership data by grade for each of the 1,695 schools in the state.

The results of this analysis showed that the fifty-seven positions per 1,000 pupils already funded by the legislature for basic, special, and vocational education were sufficient to meet the standards. However, since school divisions had to meet the higher staffing requirements of the Appropriations Act, the study revealed that an additional 1.2 positions per 1,000 pupils were required for remedial education; 1.1 positions for gifted and talented; and 0.3 positions for special education aides. Combining these results, the total instructional staffing used for the cost estimate was 59.5 positions per 1,000 pupils in average daily membership.⁴⁶

Second, in areas such as instructional salaries and costs for administration, health, transportation, and maintenance quantified standards were not available; therefore, the commission developed an approach to identify the prevailing costs across school divisions for providing programs to meet the standards. Previously, the department of education had used a statewide average to estimate SOQ costs. The General Assembly had never funded fully the amount of the department's estimate and had raised questions

⁴⁶Ibid., II.

about what cost was reasonable to use as a foundation for school division expenditure levels.

Once the concept of prevailing costs had been developed, the staff selected a statistic which represented the central location (or amount) around which the expenditure levels clustered. A linear weighted average with a weight of five for the median value was selected. The linear weighted average included all values in the calculation (all teachers' salaries for example); yet, it weighted central values (median values) more than extreme values (the highest and lowest salaries). For most instructional salary and support cost distributions, the result of applying the linear weighted average was a cost calculation less than the statewide average but greater than the costs occurred by the median-cost school divisions. The impact of using prevailing costs rather than the statewide average costs accounted for most of the difference between the department of education's estimates and the joint commission's estimates of the costs of funding fully the Standards of Quality.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission arrived at two conclusions based on the staff's methodology:

- (1) The state share of total costs of the standards was \$3,330,931,638 and the local share was \$1,831,871,750 for the 1986-88 biennium. In order to fund fully the state's

share, the General Assembly would need to increase funding by \$161,428,898 in the 1986-88 budget.⁴⁷ (2) The department of education should use the methodology developed by the joint commission's staff to estimate future costs of the Standards of Quality.⁴⁸

Reaction to JLARC I

Although the General Assembly and the governor believed that the approval of the recommendations of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission settled the question of full funding of the standards, others in the education establishment did not agree.

On December 9, 1985, Superintendent Davis appeared before the members of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to give a response to the JLARC staff report. The state board and state superintendent generally supported the recommendation for funding 59.5 instructional positions per 1,000 students in average daily membership; however, they raised questions about the use of the linear estimator statistical technique. Dr. Davis used as one illustration of the board's concern the fact that "Cape Charles has only eight elementary teachers (low salaries), while Alexandria

⁴⁷Ibid., III.

⁴⁸Ibid., IV.

has 439 elementary teachers; yet, each receives the same weight."⁴⁹

In January 1986 the Virginia Board of Education continued to debate the JLARC report. Since the new methodology established by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission differed significantly from methodology which was recommended by the original Task Force on Financing the Standards of Quality in 1972 and which was reaffirmed by the special subcommittee of the 1978 Task Force Study Funding of the Standards of Quality, the board of education unanimously approved a resolution introduced by its new president W. L. Lemmon, a member of the aforementioned study groups. The resolution urged that prior to the adoption of any change in methodology in estimating the cost of the Standards of Quality, a blue ribbon commission similar to those in 1972 and 1978 be created to study the full funding issue together with the proper allocation of costs between the state and the localities, the funding formula, and the impact on schools and children.⁵⁰

Local school boards and division superintendents, local

⁴⁹S. John Davis, "Response to the JLARC Staff Report," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 16 January 1986, 6.

⁵⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 17 January 1986, 9.

governments, the Virginia School Boards Association, and the Virginia Education Association continued to argue that the Standards of Quality were underfunded by the state. The culprit they maintained was the state's reliance on the infamous linear estimator used by JLARC to determine prevailing salaries and support costs.

There were two arguments against the use of the linear estimator: (1) The statistic was designed to be applied to sample data whenever the researcher suspected that data outliers were inappropriately affecting the results of the analysis. As a predictive tool, it should not be applied to a population data set. (2) The linear estimator calculations made by the Commonwealth were based upon the arithmetic means of each school division's classroom teacher and instructional salaries rather than the salaries paid individual classroom teachers and instructional personnel.

Illustrating the false logic of using the linear estimator was the fact that the statistic assigned equal weight to the salaries for teachers in Fairfax County and Highland County. With approximately 8,800 teachers in Fairfax and 40 teachers in Highland, use of the linear estimator failed to support fully the actual salaries paid to sixty-three percent of the teachers employed in

Virginia.⁵¹

Except for mitigating factors such as increased composite index and declining student average daily membership in a limited number of localities, most Virginia school divisions received significant increases in state funds under the approved budget bill. The General Assembly also accepted budget language which would require most localities to increase classroom teacher salaries by ten percent each year of the biennium. Some localities would be exempt from the salary mandate because their average classroom teacher salary would equal or exceed the established salary target in the budget.⁵²

The Robb-Baliles Budget

Having campaigned as a pro-education candidate, Governor Gerald L. Baliles immediately endorsed Governor Robb's recommendations for educational funding in the 1986-88 biennium. Governors Robb and Baliles asked the General Assembly to approve \$3,528,059,911 in state funds for public education. This amount included \$376,289,730 to finance full funding of the state's share of the cost of the

⁵¹VEA Prescription for Funding A System of High Quality Education in the Commonwealth, Virginia Education Association, Richmond, June 1993, 18-19.

⁵²Ralph J. Shotwell, "Memo to Local Association Leaders," February 1986, 1-2.

Standards of Quality and to fund an average salary increase for classroom teachers of at least ten percent each year of the biennium. Governor Baliles also endorsed the method suggested by Governor Robb to mandate compliance with the recommended salary increase. The new governor also commended the board of education for its proposed standard to strengthen guidance and counseling in the state's elementary schools. Baliles noted that a review of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission's Part I findings indicated that an additional position per 1,000 pupils in average daily membership could be provided within the \$376 million recommended by Governor Robb.⁵³

The General Assembly, with its most influential members endorsing the work of its own commission and the budget submitted by two governors of the majority party, approved the Robb-Baliles budget with few changes. Total direct aid to public education in the appropriations bill was \$3,525,868,252, approximately three million dollars less than Robb and Baliles had requested. However, this amount was an increase over the 1984-86 appropriation by

⁵³Staff, "Robb Budget Asks Full Funding of Standards of Quality," Public Education in Virginia, 21 no. 4 (Winter 1986), 2.

\$662,671,489 or 23.14 percent.⁵⁴

Behind the scenes in Richmond some significant changes in administration, legislature, board, and department relationships were taking place. The development of the 1986-88 biennial budget illustrated this change. The board of education, Superintendent Davis, and the department of education were working on a budget designed to fund fully the Standards of Quality and to give significant salary increases to classroom teachers. The board's budget called for an \$800 million increase in state funds. Yet, according to Secretary Finley, "The state board did not talk with Governor Robb or Governor-elect Baliles. This was not appreciated by some in the administration and by some in the legislature."⁵⁵

At the same time that the board of education was working on its budget, the administration was working on Governor Robb's last budget. Secretary of Education Donald J. Finley handled the strategic planning for a budget which was designed to meet the governor's twin priorities of full funding of the standards and increasing teacher salaries. Secretary Finley and his staff had the technical

⁵⁴Virginia Education Association, "Overview of the Governor's Proposed 1986-88 Budget for Elementary and Secondary Education," February 1986, 4.

⁵⁵Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

expertise to work with the recommendations of the legislative review commission. They "played alone in 1985-86, for no one wanted us to discuss anything with anyone. There were leaks in DOE; we didn't mess around with those people; that could put us in a bind."⁵⁶ It is not surprising then that only one budget for public education was prepared for the 1988-90 biennium--the governor's.

The teacher salary mandate was set at a meeting with key members of the General Assembly. Secretary Finley represented the administration. Senator Hunter B. Andrews, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and Delegate Dorothy S. McDiarmid, chairperson of the House Appropriations Committee, led the legislative conferees. Finley laid out the teacher salary mandate and the legislators approved.⁵⁷

The second year of the 1986-88 biennium saw little change in the budget which was passed in 1986. Only \$19,700,000 in general funding budget amendments were debated. Senator Hunter B. Andrews did sponsor legislation providing for optional retirement for state employees and education personnel at age fifty-five with thirty years of service. Also, important was approval of House Bill 1312,

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

which established a biennial study of teacher compensation in Virginia. This review mandate, introduced by House Appropriations Committee Chairperson Delegate Dorothy S. McDiarmid, provided for an evaluation of the competitive strength of Virginia teacher salaries.⁵⁸

JLARC II: SOQ Costs and Distribution

Not only was there a debate over whether or not the state was fully funding the costs of the Standards of Quality in the 1980s, but there also were serious questions raised about the equalization of the distribution of funds to local school divisions. The second phase of the studies by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission examined issues related to the distribution of funds to local school divisions.

The director of the joint commission's second study wrote:

We were guided by two primary goals: pupil equity and tax equity. The goal of pupil equity is ensuring that school divisions have the resources necessary to provide a meaningful foundation program of education for all pupils. The second goal is tax equity, or the goal of ensuring that the proportion of resources required from local government to fund an education program

⁵⁸Beverly Thurston, "General Assembly 1987: Education Highlights," Public Education in Virginia, 23 no. 1 (Spring 1987), 5.

does not vary too greatly.⁵⁹

The analysis of funding the standards yielded two primary findings. First, the basic structure of funding elementary and secondary education was considered sound. Strengths included the recognition of a wide range of costs necessary to provide the foundation program, the equalization of funds, and the use of equalization measures beyond real estate tax revenues. Second, Virginia could be doing more to promote the goals of pupil and tax equity.

The joint commission's study then made recommendations of actions designed to better address disparities in equity. In promoting pupil equity, the major suggested change was for the state to recognize the unique circumstances beyond local control that increase local costs and to reduce reliance on a single per pupil cost to fund all local programs in the state. To accomplish this end the state would (1) recognize instructional positions beyond fifty-seven positions per 1,000 pupils for basic, special, and vocational education, (2) recognize an adjustment for the cost of competing in regional wage markets beyond local control, (3) recognize variations in pupil transportation based on locality land area and the number of pupils

⁵⁹Philip A. Leone, "Introductory Statement," Funding the Standards of Quality, Part II: SOQ Costs and Distribution, Virginia General Assembly, Richmond, Virginia, 24 November 1987, 2.

transported, and (4) require local expenditures to meet the local portion of costs for all quality standards programs.⁶⁰

In addressing tax equity concerns the most important recommendation was the equalization of more funds. Identified categorical funds that could be equalized were special, vocational, and remedial education grants. Also, identified for equalization were pupil transportation and fringe benefit monies which were funded 100 percent up to certain caps. The equalization of these last two accounts would require some offsetting increase in state funds if the level of state commitment was to stay the same.⁶¹

A final study item dealt with the contention by school divisions and education interest groups that the Standards of Quality did not contain sufficient resource requirements. Different groups argued that the personnel standards did not provide sufficient positions, or that the extra costs of educating economically disadvantaged pupils, or providing English-as-a-second-language were not adequately taken into account in the standards. The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission concluded that "what items comprise the

⁶⁰Virginia General Assembly, Report of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, Part II: SOQ Costs and Distribution, Senate Document no. 25, (Richmond, 1988), 61.

⁶¹Ibid., 62.

Standards of Quality is a matter for the board of education, subject only to revision by the General Assembly."⁶²

The bulk of the report of the joint commission centered around seven options which were provided to illustrate the framework and the impact of making various distribution choices. The seven alternatives were based on ten fixed components and four variable components. Among the fixed components were increases in the instructional salary calculations to include a 5.8 percent increase for each year of the ensuing biennium, a cost-of-competing increase for Northern Virginia of 12.53 percent, a new transportation reimbursement schedule, inflation adjustments, and a cap on the local share of the cost of the standards program at 80 percent. Variable components included the equalization mechanism which determined state and local shares of program costs, the weight assigned for average daily membership and for per capita, fringe benefit programs, and other revenue proxies.⁶³

The JLARC II Aftermath

Going into the 1988 session of the General Assembly Governor Baliles and Secretary Finley considered the

⁶²Ibid., 63.

⁶³Ibid., 63.

recommendations of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to be in force. The administration also decided that the 1988-90 biennial budget for public education would be developed in the office of the secretary of education. The tradition of a state board budget developed jointly by the board, the state superintendent, and department staff was broken. Control of finances and budgets shifted to the secretary's office. Dr. Finley stated that the decision not to have a state board budget was made because there was not sufficient time for board and department involvement. The JLARC study was not completed until late in 1987, and the administration had to deliver a budget to the General Assembly in January 1988.⁶⁴

Governor Baliles and Secretary Finley did not think of their work as a shift in power. As Secretary Finley said, "It [the shift] was part of the pragmatism of the moment."⁶⁵ Finley further elaborated:

Prior to 1984 if anyone was to handle the K-12 budget, it was the department; now, however, the legislative staffs and the governor's office (i.e., secretary's office) had people who knew the formula. The General Assembly had the power brokers to handle this huge new influx of money into education. It was not a plot."⁶⁶

⁶⁴Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Gerald L. Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

Governor Baliles' managerial approach was to have key team players. Secretary Finley's strength was in numbers; when the governor wanted numbers, he called Finley. For educational results, the governor turned to Jack Davis. Governor Baliles stated, "There was no conscious shift of power from the board, superintendent, and department to the administration."⁶⁷

Reaction to the Part II Study by the joint legislative commission came from the board of education and the state superintendent late in January 1988. Dr. Davis wrote Philip A. Leone, the commission's director, "We have reviewed the report carefully and are pleased that it supports the commitment of the board of education and the Commission on Excellence in Education to reduce the educational disparities in the Commonwealth. As you are aware, the Governor's proposed 1988-90 budget contains many of the concepts contained in the report. The board of education, at its January 15 meeting, adopted a resolution endorsing the governor's budget."⁶⁸

Critics of the joint study commission's Part II report

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸S. John Davis, "Letter to Philip A. Leone," 25 January 1988, in Report of Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission on Funding the Standards of Quality, Part II: SOQ Costs and Distribution, 102.

centered its objections on the fact that "no comparison of equity between divisions by option was included in the JLARC II report. Yet achievement of greater equity was the purpose for which the options were set forth."⁶⁹ Many local school division leaders and the Virginia Education Association agreed that the lack of an equalization analysis of the seven options by JLARC II made any choice of an alternative to financing education in Virginia little more than guess work. However, the administration and the legislature moved to significant changes in the funding of public education based on JLARC II in the 1988-90 budget.

Reaction to JLARC II in the respective school divisions around the state tended to be mixed. Because there were "winners" and "losers" in the formula changes, the localities that gained funding supported the changes. However, a large number of local school division officials expressed displeasure at the report and the administration's handling of the implementation of its recommendations. Several factors made this opposition quite vocal even though virtually everyone applauded the large amounts of additional money being appropriated for public education.

⁶⁹Richard Salmon and Deborah A. Verstegen, An Analysis of the Alternatives to Current Law for Funding Public Education in Virginia as Proposed by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, Virginia Education Association, Richmond, Virginia, December 1987, 30-31.

First, the administration did not handle communications to the division superintendents well. Secretary Finley summoned superintendents to the James Monroe Building, home of the department of education, and presented Governor Baliles' budget. Dr. Finley explained the 1988-90 budget by comparing it to the 1986-88 biennial budget. Superintendents returned home believing that they were receiving larger dollar increases for the 1988-90 biennium than was actually the case. Because local school division budgets are based upon dollar increases for 1988-89 over 1987-88 and 1989-90 over 1988-89, superintendents soon realized that the increases explained by Secretary Finley were actually about one-half of the amount they left Richmond thinking they were getting.⁷⁰

Second, there was concern over the fact that the budget was obviously the administration's budget and not the board of education's budget. Superintendent Davis, the department of education's budget office, and the state board itself were not decision makers in the budget process. Secretary Finley and his staff were correctly seen as having "built the budget."⁷¹ Local school officials were nervous about the perceived "change in power" from the board,

⁷⁰Robert F. McCoy, interview with author, Wytheville, Virginia, 12 December 1994.

⁷¹Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

superintendent, and department to the executive branch.

Third, there was misunderstanding and disagreement about the long-term value of the administration's changes. Although the chief reason given for the changes was to help alleviate disparity, many of the poorer school divisions did not see the changes as beneficial. There was uncertainty and suspicion about several of the major changes: (1) the switch to individual SOQ per pupil amounts, (2) the equalization of fringe benefits, and (3) the continued mandated teacher salaries.

The major factor, however, was the fact that education officials around the state saw their traditional base of support and leadership by-passed and the office of the secretary of education take over the setting of the agenda. How to get input into this new equation added to the uncertainty. Dr. Davis was thought to have lost face and the state board was seen to be diminished in power. The educational establishment wanted to know if this change would become a permanent way to operate K-12 public education.

The 1988-90 Biennial Budget

In December 1987 Governor Baliles' budget for the 1988-90 biennium was released to the legislature, the board of education, and the public. On January 15, 1988,

Secretary of Education Donald Finley gave a detailed report on the budget to the state board.⁷²

Total direct aid to public education for the 1988-90 biennium was increased by \$605,893,359 (15.34 percent). This amount compared to an increase of \$693,139,169 (21.29 percent) in total direct aid to public education for the 1986-88 biennium.⁷³ When the General Assembly approved the public revenue appropriation for public elementary and secondary education, aid to public education was actually increased by \$570 million. When the appropriation of state funds to the direct aid of public education was viewed on a year to year basis, however, the 1988-89 increase over the 1987-88 appropriation was \$123 million (6.6 percent), and the appropriation for 1989-90 over 1988-89 was approximately \$138 million (6.9 percent).⁷⁴

The determination of the funding appropriated to public education was heavily influenced by JLARC II. Several major changes in determining Standards of Quality staffing levels and distribution of funding plus increases and decreases in

⁷²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 59, 15 January 1988, 8.

⁷³Virginia Education Association, "Overview of the Proposed 1988-90 Education Budget," Richmond, Virginia, VEA Research Service, February 1988, 1.

⁷⁴Virginia Education Association, "Overview of the 1988-90 Education Budget, Part I: 1988-89," VEA Research Service, Richmond, Virginia, September 1988, 1.

enrollment and increases and decreases in local ability to pay combined to produce "winners" and "losers" among local school divisions.

Major changes included the following: (1) A Standards of Quality amount was established individually for each local school division based upon the number of instructional personnel needed locally to meet the standards. School divisions were clustered in a complicated formula to reflect variables such as high growth, moderate capacity, rural counties like Clarke and Fluvanna; high growth, low capacity, rural counties like Alleghany and Wythe; low growth, low capacity rural counties like Grayson and Smyth; and suburbanizing counties like Albemarle and Hanover. (2) More programs were funded through equalization instead of previous categorical allotments. These included pupil transportation, special education, vocational education, and remedial education. (3) Fringe benefit payments for social security, state retirement, and state group life insurance were also equalized. Previously, the state paid 100 percent of this cost for instructional positions required by the Standards of Quality for each school division. With the change such payments by the state will be based upon the state share of 95 percent of the employer's cost in the first year and 85 percent distributed in the second year distributed on the basis of the local composite index. (4)

The state share of basic aid under calculation of the composite index was increased to 51 percent in 1988-89 and 52 percent in 1989-90 with the ultimate goal of 55 percent for the state share. (5) A "no loss" provision held twenty localities harmless from funding losses during the biennium. (6) A locality's required local expenditure was changed by adding gifted education, special education, vocational education, remedial education, pupil transportation, and fringe benefits to basic aid.

Funding was provided for the state share of an annual eight percent salary increase for all covered instructional positions. To receive Teacher Salary Incentive payments, local school divisions had to improve for the two years of the biennium the average classroom teachers' salary by an annual average of 7.3 percent over the 1987-88 budgeted average. The board of education was allowed to grant exceptions to the 7.3 percent salary increase requirement if a local school division's 1988-89 average classroom teacher salary equaled or exceeded \$33,433 in the nine localities in Planning District Eight (Northern Virginia) and \$29,710 in all other localities.⁷⁵

⁷⁵Ibid., 1-9.

Funding Increases in the Robb-Baliles Eras

In the eight years that Governor Charles S. Robb and Governor Gerald L. Baliles were in office unprecedented funding gains occurred in elementary and secondary education in the Commonwealth. During the two administrations Virginia pumped nearly two billion dollars of new money into its public school system. Table 11 depicts the total expenditures for operations and the total per pupil expenditures from 1981-82, the fiscal year before the Robb administration began, through 1990-91, the final fiscal year in the Baliles administration.

Much of the new money was aimed at improving the average salary of classroom teachers in Virginia. The goal was for Virginia's average to equal the national average classroom teacher salary. Table 12 shows the gain in average classroom teacher salary from 1981-82 through 1988-89.

Literary Fund

In 1986 Secretary of Education Donald J. Finley took the lead in revamping Virginia's Literary Fund to better meet the needs of localities across the Commonwealth. Again, Superintendent Davis and department of education staff were bypassed in the process. For much of the twentieth century the Literary Fund has provided low

Table 11

Total Expenditures for Operations and Per Pupil Costs
1981-82 through 1990-91

Fiscal Year	Total Expenditures for Operations	Total Expenditures per Pupil
1981-82	\$ 2,284,057,766	\$ 2,321
1982-83	2,505,434,084	2,580
1983-84	2,699,137,007	2,805
1984-85	2,988,582,263	3,110
1985-86	3,306,260,586	3,429
1986-87	3,599,798,348	3,708
1987-88	3,966,353,818	4,069
1988-89	4,288,609,642	4,390
1989-90	4,771,942,434	4,878
1990-91	5,053,631,282	5,077

Note: Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, 1981-82 through 1988-89 and A New Vision For Education: Superintendent's Annual Report For Virginia, 1989-90 through 1990-91, Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Table 12

Average Salary for Classroom Teachers 1981-82 through
1988-89

	Virginia			United States	
	Average Salary	Percent Increase	Rank Among States	Average Salary	Percent Increase
1981-82	17,009	9.5	34	19,276	9.2
1982-83	18,535	9.0	31	20,725	7.5
1983-84	19,676	6.2	30	21,935	5.8
1984-85	21,272	8.1	28	23,595	7.6
1985-86	23,093	8.6	26	25,201	6.8
1986-87	25,039	8.4	25	26,556	5.4
1987-88	27,189	8.6	23	28,029	5.5
1988-89	29,056	6.9	22	29,648	5.8
1989-90	30,938	6.5	22	31,368	5.8

Note: Gerald L. Baliles, Governor of Virginia, Virginia's Public Schools: Progress and a New Agenda, Richmond, Virginia, 1989.

interest loans to local school divisions for building and renovating schools. By the mid-1980s the demand for literary loans combined with the legislature's moving money from the fund to meet other budgetary needs caused significant delays in school divisions receiving state help. The 1986 General Assembly requested the office of the secretary of education to review Virginia's Literary Fund and give recommendations on how to shorten the waiting period for loans.

Secretary Donald J. Finley worked to use the fund in more creative ways and invented the interest rate subsidy program to make Literary Fund money go further. In the subsidy program the state paid the difference between the school division's interest rate for a Literary Fund loan and the market interest rate for bonds sold through the Virginia Public School Authority.⁷⁶

Dr. Finley's recommendations included the following:

- (1) The board of education should give the option to shift requests for state financing of school construction from school divisions with composite indices of .6 or greater from the Literary Fund to the Virginia Public School Authority.
- (2) The board of education should give school divisions with outstanding debt to the Literary Fund of \$10

⁷⁶Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

million or more the option to shift to the Virginia Public School Authority on loans going over the \$10 million limit. (3) The per project minimum for loans should be \$100,000. (4) The interest rate on Literary Fund loans should be coordinated with local composite indices which indicate ability to pay, i.e., 2 percent (.2 to .299); 3 percent (.3 to .399); 4 percent (.4 to .499); 5 percent (.5 to .599); and 6% (.6 to .8). (5) Temporary loans should be repaid within two years, not one year. (6) The department of planning and budget in conjunction with the department of education and the department of the treasury should project Literary Fund revenue and school division requests and use the projection as the basis for determining Literary Fund transfers for teacher retirement.⁷⁷

At its March meeting the board of education approved the draft recommendations as emergency regulations and requested Governor Baliles to approve the draft as such to become effective upon his approval.⁷⁸ The board received the final regulations at its September 1987 meeting, and the department immediately began using the revised "Regulations

⁷⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 16 January 1987, appendix C.

⁷⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 20 March 1987.

Governing Literary Loan Applications."⁷⁹

Change in Classification of Expenditures

At the October 1988 state board meeting DOE staff recommended a revision in current board regulations by reducing the number of classifications from thirteen to five for expenditures in a local school board's operating budget. Myron E. Cale and his staff in the financial office had been working with the State Auditor of Public Accounts to develop a modern system of accounting that would meet federal, state, and local accounting needs. For two years the revisions had been studied and field tested. Training sessions were held in all seven regional superintendents' study groups.

Local government officials objected to what they saw as "weakening of the current system of fiscal accountability" by having only five instead of thirteen categories in a school board budget which could be controlled by city councils and boards of supervisors. The Virginia Municipal League viewed this reduction in categories as "taking away budgeting authority from the local governing body." Ignoring these protests and accepting Mr. Cale's recommendation, the board of education approved the change

⁷⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987" 58, 17 September 1987.

to take effect in the 1989-90 fiscal year.⁸⁰

Efficiency in Public Schools

In the 1989 session of the General Assembly the large increases in funds for education that the state had provided in the 1980s came under scrutiny. There was a perception that inordinate amounts of money were being spent on school administration and that there was a great deal of inefficiency in school board offices around the state. Also, in some quarters there were negative views regarding test scores and questions regarding explanations about them.⁸¹

Senate Joint Resolution 171 mandated a study of efficiency in public schools. Chaired by Senator Dudley Emick, D-Botetourt County, the study commission looked at "noninstructional efficiency" in each of the states' local school divisions. The commission reviewed costs in administration, operation and maintenance of physical plants, and pupil transportation. Most of the data collected and analyzed were in the administrative area with four measures used for comparison: (1) whether a school

⁸⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 59, 28 October 1988, appendix A.

⁸¹Martha A. Burton, "Memorandum to Recipients of Legislative Reports," 30 August 1989, 1.

division had high administrative costs per pupil compared to similar divisions, (2) whether a school division spent a high proportion of its budget on administration compared to similar divisions, (3) whether a school's proportion of spending for administration was increasing, and (4) whether the increase in spending had been high compared to similar divisions.

The results of the study showed that sixty-three of the one hundred thirty-six school divisions met at least one of the above measures.⁸² However, other than a number of negative attacks on the inefficiency of school administrators, especially superintendents, by Senator Emick, no significant changes came from the commission's study. In fact, most local school boards and governing bodies interpreted the results of the study commission as favorable. With Senator Emick's retirement from the legislature, the hue and cry about inefficiency returned to more normal periodic questioning.

Membership in Virginia Public Schools

Student membership in Virginia's public schools declined for nine consecutive years until it reached a low

⁸²General Assembly, Commonwealth of Virginia, Report of the Commission Studying Efficiency in Public Schools, Richmond, Virginia, 30 August 1989, 3-48.

in 1984-85, and then in the first year of the Baliles administration numbers began to increase. In 1975-76 Virginia had a high of 1,080,091 students. End-of-year membership dropped for nine consecutive years to 946,523 students in 1984-85. By 1994-95 the number was projected to gradually increase to 1,028,000.

High school graduates, 60,959 in 1984-85, were projected to increase for several years in the late 1980s but then decline to 57,900 in 1992-93. It was also projected that the March 31 average daily membership (ADM) count by which state basic school aid is distributed to local school divisions would follow a pattern similar to total end-of-year membership.⁸³

Implications for public education were obvious. More money would be needed by state and local governments to fund costs generated by new students. More classrooms, more teachers, more books and supplies, and more buses would be needed in 1990.

Educational Initiatives

Education played a prominent role in the election campaign of Gerald L. Baliles; and when he became Virginia's

⁸³Staff, "Projected Membership in Virginia Public Schools," Public Education in Virginia, 22 no. 1 (Spring 1986), 8-9.

chief executive, education and transportation became the two most emphasized programs of his administration. A highly organized management specialist, the new governor entered office with "a strategy, then goals, objectives, and tactics for public education."⁸⁴

His strategy throughout his four year term was to bring the importance of education in the international economy to the attention of the public. According to Baliles:

The world has changed. Billions of dollars are now transferred from one continent to another. Eighty percent of the world market is less than one non-stop flight away from the United States. We compete with the rest of the world to keep a customer across the street. We have gone from human labor to money to information or intellect as capital.⁸⁵

Baliles' goal was to stress the value of education as a continuing objective throughout life. Again, Baliles' goal was tied to economics for life. He said, "Our economic future hinged upon our ability to compete, and our ability to compete depended on our ability to educate."⁸⁶

The governor and his administration then focused on specific objectives which were used to implement tactics to

⁸⁴Gerald L. Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

accomplish the objectives.⁸⁷ Within six to eight months of taking office "the Baliles administration had sixty-eight commitments in education." The governor was very systematic, had a list to accomplish, and kept score. Each summer when Secretary of Education Finley met with Governor Baliles for his annual evaluation, Baliles asked about progress on the sixty-eight items.⁸⁸

In addition to Baliles' own strategies for education, he was committed to complete Governor Charles S. Robb's "quality agenda for education which included upgrading educational financing for full funding of the Standards of Quality and for improving teachers' salaries to the national average."⁸⁹

In his "State-of-the-State" message on January 13, 1986, Governor Baliles announced: "I will ask the board of education to draft the blueprint that will place Virginia in the first rank of education systems in the nation."⁹⁰ Soon thereafter, Secretary of Education Finley suggested to the governor that "we take the Education Committee from the 1984

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Donald Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Gerald L. Baliles, Governor of Virginia, "State-of-the-State Address to the General Assembly of Virginia," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 14 January 1986, A-6.

Commission on Virginia's Future and add it to the board of education and let them constitute the Commission on Excellence in Education."⁹¹

The governor did create such a commission two months into his term of office, and from that commission was to come a large majority of the educational initiatives of the Baliles administration.

The Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education

On March 24, 1986, Governor Baliles held a news conference in Richmond to announce the formation of the Commission on Excellence in Education. The sitting board of education members and the education committee of Governor Robb's Commission on Virginia's Future were named to the new commission. Willard L. Lemmon of Marion, president of the board of education, was selected to chair the commission. Dr. Davis, who had been bypassed in the initial planning for the commission, was reappointed state superintendent when the commission's formation was announced. Davis then assigned ten "Blue Ribbon" department staff members to assist the commission.

In announcing the formation of the Commission on Excellence in Education, Baliles linked schools' excellence

⁹¹Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

with attracting industries in Virginia. "Business executives considering Virginia asked about two things-- transportation and education," said Baliles.⁹²

Two days later at Patrick Henry High School in Roanoke, the governor addressed the initial meeting of the commission and reiterated the charge of the Governor's Commission on Virginia's Future in 1984 when it declared that education should be the highest priority of the Commonwealth. Baliles told the commission that Virginia's statewide educational system should be among the nation's best state systems and numerically "should rank among the top ten states in the quality of education it offers." He added, "Your responsibility is to consider and recommend specific actions--not to study or restudy, not to reinvent the wheel, but to start it rolling."⁹³

Governor Baliles then extolled what he saw as examples of progress in education in the state. Among the positive examples given were the following: (1) Virginia's students tested above the national average on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2) Virginia's students have improved Scholastic Aptitude

⁹²Hardy, "Dr. Davis Is Renamed Schools Chief," A-1.

⁹³Gerald L. Baliles, Governor of Virginia, "Remarks to the Commission on Excellence in Education: Charge to the Commission," 26 March 1986, 1-2.

Test scores faster than others. (3) Virginia students now rank seventh among the twenty-two states using the Scholastic Aptitude Test. (4) Virginia's eleventh graders score significantly higher than the national average on standardized achievement tests in reading. (5) Virginia's more rigorous academic standards have not caused the dropout rate to increase but to improve. (6) Teachers' salaries and expenditures per pupil have increased dramatically. (7) The board of education led reform of teacher certification regulations and school accreditation standards.

The governor's concerns included seven points of comparison with other states: (1) Virginia students test below the national average in math. (2) Teacher shortages are predicted. 3) Thirty-eight percent of adults over twenty-five years of age have no high school diploma. (4) Twenty-four states have a lower dropout rate than Virginia. (5) In 1980 there were an estimated 766,000 functionally illiterate Virginians. (6) There are still some weak schools in Virginia. (7) Virginia school children do not yet enjoy truly equal educational opportunity, for achievement, expenditures, pupil-teacher ratios, courses, facilities, and equipment vary widely.

As an internationalist, Governor Baliles asserted that the most important benchmarks for Virginia were world standards. He then cited six weaknesses that Virginia had

in comparison to the rest of the world: (1) In a 1982 study of mathematics, seniors in the United States scored lower than the Japanese and well below the mean score of students in fifteen nations. (2) The top ten percent of both United States and Japanese students do well. The remaining ninety percent of Japanese students do better than their American counterparts. (3) Most foreign nations have more days in the school year than the United States. (4) The status and salaries of teachers in Japan are higher than those of virtually all other public employees in that country. (5) Six percent of United States baccalaureate degrees are in engineering; in Japan twenty percent of college degrees are in engineering. (6) American students do not study and master foreign languages like others.

Baliles concluded his charge to the commission by declaring, "I am a firm believer in keeping score, and [I expect] you [to] let us know how to measure our standing in education."⁹⁴

The Report

The sixteen member Commission on Excellence in Education worked from March until October 1986, when its final report was released. Containing twenty-nine pages of

⁹⁴Baliles, "Be Bold, Creative, Governor Urges Commission," 1-3.

recommendations, the report urged sweeping changes in the state's public school system. The timetable for implementing the thirty-six proposals extended from 1987 to the year 2000. Most of the proposals were to become effective over the final three years of the Baliles administration.

The commission's report was divided into five sections centered around the targets identified by commission members. The commission's first recommendations centered around educational disparity and illiteracy. Prominent among these proposals were the following: (1) School divisions provide voluntary preschool programs for four-year old at-risk children by September 1, 1988, and for all four-year olds by September 1, 1992. (2) The state establish literacy tests in reading, writing, and mathematics for all sixth graders, beginning July 1, 1987. (3) Remedial help would be made available in expanded summer schools, after-school programs, and special courses for students who fail the literacy passport and for students scoring in the bottom quartile on nationally standardized tests. Other recommendations in this section included state support for programs to reduce the performance gap between black and white students, to achieve smaller class size in grade one and middle and high school English, to involve vocational education in the literacy effort, and to improve

and expand gifted education and special education.

The second set of recommendations was designed to lift the level of teaching and educational leadership. The most critical changes included: (1) requiring an undergraduate degree in an arts and sciences discipline for all teachers educated in Virginia by July 1, 1992, and placing a cap of eighteen semester hours on professional education courses at the undergraduate level, (2) restructuring all college and university teacher education programs in the state, (3) having teacher salaries that are competitive in the marketplace, (4) providing financial incentives to school divisions to help develop plans to keep effective teachers in the classroom, and (5) upgrading graduate programs in school administration in the state.

The third area of concern was in taking advantage of technology in teaching and learning. To accomplish that end the commission recommended that the state employ an assistant superintendent for technology, who would develop and direct a five-year plan to make educational technology an integral part of public school education. All schools should be provided with a minimal number of computers, and middle school teachers should be provided with micro-computers for the classroom and with instruction for using them by July 1, 1990. Also, more widespread use of the electronic classroom could provide the poorest rural schools

with the same courses and quality of instruction now available in the richest suburban schools. An electronic communications network would be established between the department of education and all school divisions for the storage and transmittal of financial, student, and teacher records and information.

Fourth, the middle school was regarded as a crucial link but a major problem in the education process and was targeted for improvement. The department of education was to begin immediately to restructure middle school education. To this end the department would establish model programs for middle schools. The commission also recommended that no school division have a dropout rate higher than the present statewide average, and that the present statewide average be reduced by one-half. The effort to reduce dropout rates should emphasize assistance to middle school students who are potential dropouts.

The fifth group of recommendations were to address accountability. In terms of the commission's report, accountability would be judged by how effectively recommendations were carried out in the future. The commission's accountability proposals included preparing local school personnel to implement the commission's report and defining more precisely the duties and responsibilities of the state board and state superintendent and of local

boards, superintendents, and principals. Further, the commission would require the state superintendent and the state board to identify annually schools that were outstanding or educationally deficient. The state would establish and fund two grant programs, one to reward exceptional schools and one to help deficient schools. Recognizing student achievement as the "final indication of accountability," the commission urged the use of national measures of achievement to provide state-by-state comparisons of student performance.

Finally, the commission requested that the General Assembly adopt and fund its recommendations, as appropriate, for inclusion in Virginia's Standards of Quality. It also offered factors for consideration as the legislature examined the equity of the current distribution of state funds to school divisions. The governor was asked to appoint an "oversight committee" in the fall of 1987 to review progress in implementing the recommendations.⁹⁵

Dr. S. John Davis, superintendent of public instruction, was identified by commission members as the most influential actor in shaping the recommendations made by the commission. Dr. Davis was given credit by persons

⁹⁵"Excellence in Education: A Plan for Virginia's Future," The Report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, October 1986, 1-29.

interviewed in a 1990 study for having originated eleven of the thirty-six commission recommendations.⁹⁶

In the final three years of the Baliles governorship the Virginia Board of Education, the Virginia Department of Education, and Superintendent S. John Davis had the report of the Commission on Excellence in Education to serve as a focal point for much of what they sought to accomplish. Dr. Davis' ability to implement programs was needed by the administration in this area, and he took the lead in shaping the educational initiatives that emerged from the commission's work.

The Response

At the December 1986 meeting of the board of education Secretary of Education Donald F. Finley distributed a letter from Governor Baliles to W. L. Lemmon, president of the board. Dr. Finley noted the essence of this letter stated that all recommendations of the report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence were to be pursued by the board of education as soon as possible. Dr. Davis then distributed a paper which provided a breakdown of the thirty-six recommendations of the commission. Each recommendation was placed in one of three categories: new programs, needed

⁹⁶Bean, 184-185.

legislation, or board of education action.⁹⁷

The board, superintendent, and department then began working closely with the governor, the secretary of education, and the legislature to plan and implement the needed changes in a timely manner. The response of the board of education divided the thirty-six specific recommendations into seven broad educational issues: disparity, literacy, teacher education, educational leadership, technology, middle schools, and accountability.⁹⁸ The response to the first six issues will be summarized in the next pages of this section of this chapter; the seventh issue--accountability--will be discussed in the section immediately following this one.

Disparity

One of the most significant challenges facing education in Virginia was related to the wide differences that existed among the state's more than one hundred and thirty local school divisions. Economic disparity was addressed by the Baliles administration and the General Assembly through the

⁹⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 12 December 1986, 93.

⁹⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Virginia Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 17.

new funding formula proposed by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission in 1987-88. Dr. Davis, the department, and the board responded to disparity in academic achievement among schools and among groups of students through a variety of programs during 1987-89.

Pre-school programs. The Virginia Board of Education began planning pilot programs for the estimated 16,800 four-year olds in Virginia that were developmentally disadvantaged or "at risk" of failure once they started school. By the end of 1988 pilot programs for at-risk four-year-olds had been established in eight school divisions. The 1988 General Assembly established a joint subcommittee to study the four-year-old schooling issue.⁹⁹ The 1989 General Assembly established the Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs. The principal goal of this new council was that each of the state's at-risk four-year-olds would be attending a preschool program by 1995. The council's scope included private preschools, family day-care providers, corporate day-care programs, social service agencies, Head Start, and school-based preschool programs. The board and the department expanded its pilot program for at-risk four-

⁹⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Becoming a Leader in Education: The 1988 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 8.

year-olds to eleven school divisions in 1989.¹⁰⁰

Minority Student Performance. New state standards were adopted by the board in 1989 to address the performance of minority students. The state required each school to put specific programs in place to improve the learning and aspirations of culturally disadvantaged students. The new standards required each middle and high school to identify minority students with college potential. Special college preparation programs were required to motivate disadvantaged and minority students to attend college. Project Discovery, which received a \$1.37 million dollar appropriation from the General Assembly, was established to help economically deprived and minority students prepare for college.¹⁰¹

Special Education. The board and the department scrutinized Virginia's special education programs during the 1987-88 school year. A report issued in March 1988 included fifty-two recommendations for improvement. New and improved monitoring and compliance procedures were established. Parent Resource Centers were established at fifteen sites

¹⁰⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Virginia Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 19-20.

¹⁰¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Becoming A Leader in Education: The 1988 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 8.

throughout the state. All localities were to have similar parent centers by 1991.

In an effort to improve communications among those concerned about special education, the board of education and Superintendent of Public Instruction S. John Davis hosted a series of public meetings across the state throughout 1988. The meetings included parents of special education children, local school board members, and special education administrators.¹⁰²

Enrollment for handicapped students grew to more than 100,000 statewide (more than one in ten) in 1989, and state funding for local special education programs increased from \$116 million in the 1986-88 biennium to \$202 million in 1988-90. Because of this growth, state technical assistance and monitoring increased with a corresponding increase in department of education staff. By the end of the Baliles administration thirty-seven parent centers serving forty-four localities were in operation.¹⁰³

Preventing Dropouts. New emphasis on keeping at-risk children in school included a statewide conference, videotapes made for television, brochures, and a forum in

¹⁰²Ibid., 9.

¹⁰³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Virginia Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 20.

which middle school students talked to selected prison inmates. Alternative education programs and mandatory dropout prevention programs were required at the local school division level. By 1989 the dropout rate in Virginia was under five percent. The goal for the 1990s was to cut the state dropout rate by one-half.¹⁰⁴

Preventing Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse. Working with Attorney-General Mary Sue Terry, Dr. Davis and the board helped to develop programs and secure funding to deal with substance abuse. In the summer of 1986 the department and the attorney-general's office sent a letter to all school divisions in support of substance abuse prevention.¹⁰⁵ Two significant programs were developed to fight substance abuse in schools. The Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Program (YADAPP) was designed to train student leaders in schools, and Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) was developed as a cooperative program which placed local police officers in schools to teach alcohol and drug education programs.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report, 1986-87, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, n.d., 5.

¹⁰⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 31 July 1986, 64.

¹⁰⁶Superintendent of Public Instruction, Annual Report, 1986-87, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, n.d., 5.

Governor's School Programs. The Governor's School Programs, launched during the Robb administration, were continued and expanded. During the 1988-89 school year five state-supported full-time regional governor's schools offered accelerated programs in math, science, technology, and the arts. More than 2,280 students from 32 school divisions attended these programs. Also, five summer residential schools and twenty regional day programs served more than 2,700 students during the summer of 1989.¹⁰⁷

Literacy

The Commission on Excellence in Education was concerned with breaking the cycle of illiteracy in Virginia's schools. The fact that thousands of functionally illiterate students drop out of school each year was a major obstacle to excellence. The 1980 census showed that twenty-two percent of Virginia's adults age twenty-five and older had less than nine years of schooling. Twenty percent of the adult population could not read and compute beyond the fifth grade level.¹⁰⁸ Major literacy activities included the

¹⁰⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Virginia Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 19.

¹⁰⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Becoming A Leader in Education: The 1988 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education,

following:

Literacy Testing. The board, department, and state superintendent developed the Literacy Passport Testing Program to ensure that every student in Virginia learned the basics before going on to high school. The tests were administered for the first time to sixth grade students during the 1987-88 school year. Starting in the 1989-90 school year, every sixth grade student was required to pass basic skills tests in reading, writing, and mathematics before being promoted to the ninth grade. Students retake any portion of the test that they fail. Schools must provide remedial help through tutoring, summer school, remedial classes, computer labs, and other special programs for students who fail.¹⁰⁹

Remedial Instruction. As a part of the revised accreditation standards and the Standards of Quality, all local school divisions were required to have specific remedial programs in place for students who score in the bottom quartile on national standardized tests. The board of education placed special emphasis on summer school remediation, and the 1988-90 state budget provided 4.75

Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 10.

¹⁰⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 21-22.

million in funding for remedial summer programs in elementary schools.¹¹⁰

Class Size. The board of education revised the accreditation standards and the Standards of Quality to require student-teacher ratios of twenty-four to one in the first grade and in high school and middle school English classes. The long-range goal was set to reduce these ratios to eighteen to one by the year 2000.¹¹¹

International Education. Encouraged by the interest of Governor Gerald L. Baliles, a major emphasis was placed on geography and foreign language programs. A cooperative program under the auspices of the National Geographic Society, the Virginia Geographic Alliance, and the department of education distributed geographic materials, resources, and more than 500,000 maps to classrooms across the state.¹¹²

Virginia also became the first state to offer students state-funded summer foreign language immersion programs. Supported by Governor Baliles and Superintendent Davis, the first program was held in the summer of 1986. Some sixty

¹¹⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Becoming A Leader in Education: The 1988 Report of the Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 11.

¹¹¹Ibid., 11-12.

¹¹²Ibid., 22.

students participated in a French Academy for a month with teachers, administrators, assistants, and students living together on the same campus twenty-four hours a day with the objective of speaking French. Students attended three classes a day in the history of French art, literature, history, geography, economics, politics, practical grammar, and specialized vocabulary. A secondary language class in Japanese was also offered.¹¹³ In the summer of 1987 the state added immersion academies in Spanish, German, and Asian studies. Then in 1988 Latin and Russian programs were added.¹¹⁴

Teacher Education

The Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education affirmed that for Virginia to have one of the nation's best school systems teachers must be of the highest calibre. The board of education responded to this challenge with two approaches: (1) keeping teaching attractive through increases in salary, forgivable loans to prospective math and science teachers, and guidelines to increase the number

¹¹³Rosanne Simon, "A French-Speaking Virginia?" Public Education in Virginia, 22 no. 4 (Winter 1987), 23-24.

¹¹⁴S. John Davis, "Governor's Foreign Language Academies in Virginia," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 2.

of teachers with graduate degrees;¹¹⁵ and (2) improving teacher education by making fundamental changes in programs and requirements.

Restructuring. In January 1987 the board of education appointed an ad hoc Committee on Teacher Education to work with representatives of the State Council of Higher Education on implementing the recommendations of the Commission on Excellence.¹¹⁶ Throughout 1987, 1988, and the first half of 1989 the board committee and representatives of the colleges and universities worked to restructure teacher training programs that would (1) abolish undergraduate degrees in education, (2) require undergraduate degrees in arts and sciences, (3) limit professional education courses to eighteen hours, and (4) require more time in supervised student teaching.

In June and July 1989 the State Board of Education and the State Council of Higher Education gave approval to the colleges' plans. The thirty-seven revised teacher training programs became effective July 1, 1990.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵S. John Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction, "Annual Report, 1986-87" Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 8.

¹¹⁶Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 16 January 1987, 9.

¹¹⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Richmond, Virginia, November 1989, 24.

Recertification. The board of education, the state superintendent, and department staff began working on revisions in teacher recertification. In October 1988 the board held its first review of the point system for recertification,¹¹⁸ and by its March meeting the board had set its timetable for public hearings and revisions (spring 1989), final approval (June 1989), school division piloting, (1989-90 school year), and statewide implementation (July 1, 1990).¹¹⁹

The new certification regulations provided teachers more flexibility in paths to recertification, and established a point system for various professional activities. The system required teachers to earn 180 recertification points over a five-year period. Points could be earned for such things as college courses, professional conferences, supervision of beginning teachers, and publication of an article or book. For those teachers without master's degrees, at least half of the points must be earned through graduate-level college work in the

¹¹⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 59, 28 October 1988, 79.

¹¹⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1989," 60, 31 March 1989, 24.

teacher's field of expertise.¹²⁰

Educational Leadership. Describing the principal as "the single most important person in a school," the Commission on Excellence recommended that the preparation of principals be upgraded. The board of education set up an ad hoc committee of the board of education and the council of higher education to work to restructure graduate programs in educational administration. By the end of 1989 guidelines were in place to help colleges restructure their training programs for educational administrators. The guidelines included a full-time internship, a formal assessment of a prospective principals leadership skills, and coursework in school-based management, legal issues, and instruction. The board also required the new programs to include steps to recruit minorities, women, and academically talented students into graduate education programs.¹²¹

The Standards of Quality were also revised to include a new requirement that all local superintendents and school board members participate in training programs to be updated

¹²⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Education: The 1989 Report of the Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 24.

¹²¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Virginia Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 26.

on issues that affect their schools. The board of education endorsed the School Board Academy established by the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) to provide inservice education opportunities for local leaders.¹²²

Technology

The Governor's Commission on Excellence urged greater use of technology in teaching and learning. To implement the commission's recommendations the state board hired an assistant state superintendent for technology, developed a six-year technology plan, and requested and received funding for Phase I of the plan in the 1988-90 budget.¹²³

Distance Learning. The board of education and DOE staff expanded the electronic classroom originally set up in the model high school in Henrico County. By 1989 all two hundred ninety-three high schools in the state received through state funding a satellite receiving dish, a video cassette recorder, a television, a speaker telephone, and a facsimile transmitter to operate electronically received classes. Students in smaller schools were now able to take calculus, Latin, and other advanced courses that previously

¹²²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Becoming A Leader in Education: The 1988 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 15.

¹²³Ibid., 16.

had not been available.

Computers. In 1989 classrooms throughout the state received 6,647 microcomputers and 1,501 printers. This effort provided every middle school with at least one computer for every ten students. Teachers also had access to the computers to develop lessons and keep student records.

Other technology initiatives. The technology plan also provided for interactive teleconferencing for staff development opportunities, electronic networking to link schools to databases throughout the world and to the department of education, and a comprehensive training model to develop groups of skilled master teachers who, in turn, would help their colleagues become experts at using computers in the classroom.¹²⁴

Middle Schools

The 1986 Governor's Commission Report charged that the middle school grades--six through eight--were an educational wasteland. In response, the state board approved a process for restructuring programs in the middle school grades. The process had two components: the identification of Vanguard

¹²⁴Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Spotlight on Education: The 1989 Report of the Virginia Board of Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 27-28.

Schools and the development and implementation of a restructuring process in all schools which had grades 6, 7, or 8.¹²⁵

Other significant recommendations made by the Governor's Commission were also addressed by the administration, the legislature, the board, and the state superintendent. These programs will be discussed in later sections of this chapter that deal with accountability and management.

Beginning Teacher Assistance Program

During the Robb administration the Virginia Board of Education, with Dr. Davis' strong endorsement, authorized department led by Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., to initiate the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program (BTAP). Implemented July 1, 1985, BTAP was designed to both evaluate and assist beginning teachers as they sought to demonstrate mastery of fourteen instructional competencies.¹²⁶

By 1986-87 the nine regional BTAP centers had completed the process of converting to one standard computerized

¹²⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, October 1989, 2.

¹²⁶James P. Esposito and Jamie B. Hylton. "BTAP Spells 'Assistance,'" Public Education in Virginia, 22 no. 3 (Fall 1986), 1.

system. Centers then could send each teacher's BTAP assessment file to DOE through telephone modems, and data on each teacher could then be sent back by the same means.¹²⁷

Funding to run the program and support by S. John Davis and the state board continued throughout the Baliles administration. Yet the program had its detractors, and some inside the department believed that "BTAP was not going anywhere. Davis and Howerton had copied a Georgia plan to assess and assist beginning teachers, and it was bound to fail in Virginia."¹²⁸ However, BTAP would remain in force until after Dr. Davis had left the state superintendency.

Pay-for-Performance and Master Teacher Programs

The Robb administration had strongly backed improving education through pay-for-performance and master teacher incentive programs. Dr. Davis, the state board, the department, several localities, and a special committee had developed criteria and pilot programs that were field tested during the Baliles administration's first year in office.

As late as the fall of 1986 the board of education was still working on implementation. In September the state

¹²⁷John W. Dickens, "BTAP Centers Come of Age," Public Education in Virginia, 23 no. 1 (Spring 1987), 20.

¹²⁸William H. Cochran, interview with author, Richmond, Virginia, 7 January 1994.

board reviewed the report submitted by Measurement Incorporated on evaluation of the pay-for-performance pilot projects in Virginia. Five recommendations were submitted for the board's consideration: (1) To assess teacher, principal, and public understanding of and support for pay-for-performance, (2) to document all aspects of the evaluation procedure, (3) to train and evaluate the evaluators, (4) to involve teachers, principals, central office staff and the public in developing the plan, and (5) to make a realistic estimate of the local division's administrative capacity to implement a pay-for-performance plan.¹²⁹

However, no further mention of pay-for-performance projects is found in board minutes as the administration quietly dropped funding in the 1987-88 budget for such initiatives. According to Secretary of Education Finley, career ladder initiatives were "not on the administration's plate" for four reasons: (1) There were early indications that such schemes were not going well in some states. (2) Opposition from the Virginia Education Association and a corresponding lack of support from Governor Baliles in his campaign were important factors. (3) The administration tended to believe that personnel matters should remain in

¹²⁹Board of Education, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 26 September 1986, 73.

localities. (4) To institute career ladder, master teacher, and pay-for-performance programs, the state would have to pump money in to "buy it, if you will." Increases in SOQ funding and teachers' salaries were enough of a financial burden.¹³⁰

Family Life Education

During the 1986 General Assembly several legislative proposals were introduced which reflected the growing concern regarding the problem of teenage pregnancy and its ensuing ramifications. In response the legislature passed House Joint Resolution 61, which established a joint subcommittee to study the problem of teenage pregnancy in Virginia and develop recommendations to reduce the incidence of such pregnancies.¹³¹

Chaired by Delegate Joan H. Munford, D-Montgomery County, with Senator Elliot S. Schewel, D-Lynchburg, serving as vice-chair, the subcommittee completed a detailed study that made three recommendations for the 1987 General Assembly to consider. First a comprehensive and sequential Family Life Education (FLE) Program be mandated in public

¹³⁰Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

¹³¹General Assembly, Commonwealth of Virginia, Report of the Joint Subcommittee Studying Teenage Pregnancy, House Document no. 39, Richmond, Virginia, 1987, 1.

schools, K-12, which included all aspects of family living, human sexuality, and sexually transmitted diseases. Waivers and exemptions were to be included in the program. Second, the prescribed FLE Program must include a unit on the benefits of postponing sexual intercourse, the development of a positive self-concept, and mechanisms to cope with peer pressure. Third, the department of education was to encourage pupil services personnel to engage teens, teenage parents, individuals who were teenage parents, positive role models in the community, and other licensed or recognized professional counselors in counseling sexually active and at-risk youth.¹³²

The 1987 General Assembly received the joint subcommittee's report, debated its merits with some strong differences in opinion, and then on March 24, 1987, passed House Bill 1413. The bill stipulated the following:

The Board of Education shall develop by December 1, 1987, standards of learning and curriculum guidelines for a comprehensive and sequential family life education curriculum in grades K-12. Such curriculum guidelines shall include instruction as appropriate for the age of the student in family living and community relationships, the value of postponing sexual activity, human sexuality, human reproduction, and the etiology, prevention, and effects of sexually transmitted diseases. All such instruction shall be designed to promote parental involvement, foster positive self-concept, and

¹³²Ibid., 2.

provide mechanisms for coping with peer pressure and the stresses of modern living.¹³³

With family life education, or sex education as its opponents always called it, a political "hot potato," the Baliles administration had to decide whether or not to support approval or let it die in the General Assembly. As the debate on FLE continued, Governor Baliles decided that he wanted FLE approved, and he told Secretary Finley that the administration would work to secure passage of FLE in the legislature.¹³⁴

The board of education also supported the Family Life Education Program. Although the General Assembly was a "tough sell," the administration's support and Dr. Davis' dual strategy of placing money in the budget to make the program a "funded mandate" and having the board adopt a curriculum that gave localities an option made it palatable.¹³⁵

When the General Assembly approved House Bill 1413 directing the board of education to develop standards of learning and curriculum guidelines for FLE, the board was enthusiastic but the state superintendent and the deputy

¹³³Virginia Acts of Assembly, 1987 Session, Chapter 371, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

¹³⁴Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

¹³⁵Ibid.

superintendent he put in charge of the program had serious reservations. They were particularly worried about the potential for public explosion on the issue. However, Dr. Davis' philosophy was that the board and department had a legislative mandate and needed to get it done. If a critic said this part or that part needed to be softened, the staff did so.¹³⁶

The development, approval, and implementation of the Family Life Education Program was one of S. John Davis' most successful efforts as state superintendent. FLE was a tricky issue, but Davis used effectively his ability to listen to people and then forge compromises that most could accept.¹³⁷

The board of education began its assigned task by holding a series of public hearings around the state. At the May 1987 board meeting Margaret S. Marston reviewed a summary of the hearings. Her review of points raised included selecting and training teachers, involving parents, having a family instructional unit, providing for sex separated classes, stressing abstinence, and having an opt out procedure.¹³⁸

¹³⁶Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

¹³⁷Smith, interview, 4 February 1994.

¹³⁸Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 21 May 1987, 87.

At the August board meeting Dr. Howerton presented a first draft of the Standards of Learning objectives for the Family Life Education Program. October 13, 1987, was set for a public hearing on the draft.¹³⁹ At the October board meeting a first review of FLE was completed. Cost estimates for the program were estimated to be \$5,550,000 for the 1988-90 biennium.¹⁴⁰

On November 16, 1987, the board completed its final review of the FLE Program and accepted as a working document the Standards of Learning objectives as recommended by the superintendent of public instruction. The board discussed each objective grade by grade and made some changes. The major amendment was to allow school divisions to reassign grade designations of SOL objectives for grades K-6 freely and to reassign objectives in grades 7-12 up or down one grade level.¹⁴¹ Then, on December 9, 1987, the state superintendent recommended the FLE Program to the board for approval. Several changes were made before the board approved the program that was submitted to the General

¹³⁹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 20 August 1987, 119.

¹⁴⁰Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 58, 22 October 1987, 146.

¹⁴¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 16 November 1987, 181.

Assembly.¹⁴²

The FLE program as passed by the board of education included the following regulations:

- (1) Each local school board shall implement a program of family life education subject to appropriation by the General Assembly for costs of the program.
- (2) The following guidelines shall be followed in implementation of family life education:
 - (a) A community involvement team.
 - (b) Much evidence of broad-based community involvement and an annual opportunity for parents and others to review curriculum and instructional materials prior to instruction.
 - (c) The individuals selected to teach shall participate in a training program sponsored by the DOE.
 - (d) FLE leaders from each grade level will be identified to assist in training individuals who teach the program.
 - (e) The medical profession will be involved in setting up the local program.
 - (f) An opt-out procedure shall be included.
 - (g) A plan for teaching sensitive content in sex-separated classes shall be announced publicly.
- (3) FLE Standards of Learning objectives approved by the board of education shall be used by local school boards. However, local school divisions may reassign the grade designation of SOL objectives within K-6 and move objectives one level up or down in grades 7-12. Also, a local division may adopt a K-10 or a K-12 program.
- (4) An FLE program may be developed locally. It must include content areas of human sexuality, reproduction, contraception, and sexually transmitted diseases. A community involvement team must be used if this local approach is

¹⁴²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 9 December 1987, 196.

adopted.¹⁴³

The controversial nature of the FLE program adopted can be seen in the newspaper stories and editorials reporting and analyzing the board's response to the General Assembly. In November, as the board of education made its final review of the program, an editor in the Richmond Times-Dispatch wrote of the "amusing spectacle at the Capital" with "a legislative committee as nervous as a schoolboy on a first date." The jitters were caused by a family life, or sex education curriculum, prepared at the direction of the 1987 General Assembly.¹⁴⁴

Then, the educational writer for the same newspaper reported that "on Wednesday, December 9, the board of education capped months of emotional debate by voting 7 to 2 to install a \$5.5 million sex education program in every state school system." The reporter also noted that "S. John Davis crafted the compromise by mixing local option elements within the framework of a state movement."¹⁴⁵ And in the same article, Walter E. Barbeer, chairman of the Concerned

¹⁴³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Family Life Education, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, March 1988, 1-2.

¹⁴⁴Editorial, "Legislatively Conceived," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 15 November 1987, B-4.

¹⁴⁵Charles Cox, "'Sex Ed' Compromise Passes," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 10 December 1987, C-1.

Citizens Council, was quoted as protesting that the board-approved curriculum "offers too much, too soon, to our children."¹⁴⁶

An editorial a few days after board approval of FLE charged that the board of education "has exhibited the arrogance of power that drives local government officials right up the wall." The state board was, "thanks to the state superintendent of public instruction on the verge of negotiating the sex-education mine field successfully until Alexandria member Suzanne Thomas offered a little amendment." Mrs. Thomas' amendment said localities will not receive a full share of state funds unless they embrace the state's curriculum. If they deviate, they receive only partial payment. "Mrs. Thomas calls this an incentive, but it smacks of blackmail." The General Assembly should revert to Dr. Davis' plan and give localities the flexibility to depart from the state model.¹⁴⁷

With strong backing from the administration of Governor Gerald L. Baliles, the General Assembly approved the Family Life Education curriculum and Standards of Learning objectives to be used in Virginia's public schools. The

¹⁴⁶Staff, "Family Life Plan Backed, But with Local Flexibility," Richmond News Leader, 8 December 1987, 1.

¹⁴⁷Editorial, "Sex and the Arrogant State," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 13 December 1987, A-4.

legislature sent a clear message to the board of education about the family life curriculum it had directed the board to develop. "It wanted local school boards to have a big say-so in what kinds of programs actually emerged. It wanted children advised to 'just say no' to premarital sexual relations. And it wanted parents to be involved at every step of the way and to reserve their right to remove their children from any instruction they deemed objectionable."¹⁴⁸ The legislative body clearly backed Dr. Davis' approach in refusing to accept the board's amendment that cut funds to localities that did not use the state's curriculum.

Dr. Davis and department staff clearly followed the General Assembly's wishes as they worked with localities in the ensuing months to implement the program. Dr. Davis helped localities by allowing the state to be a buffer on the sex education issue.¹⁴⁹

Elementary School Guidance

In his 1985 gubernatorial campaign Gerald L. Baliles stated, "I will thus propose that in the next biennium the

¹⁴⁸Editorial, "Message on Sex Education," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 25 April 1988, A-4.

¹⁴⁹C. Fred Bateman, telephone conversation with author, 17 February 1993.

Commonwealth establish a pilot program that will form the foundation for a statewide Elementary Guidance Program."¹⁵⁰ After his inauguration Governor Baliles commended to the General Assembly the board of education's proposed standard to require guidance and counseling in Virginia's elementary schools.¹⁵¹

Secretary of Education Don Finley appeared at the February 1986 state board meeting to give several suggestions for implementing an elementary guidance program statewide as recommended by Governor Baliles. The administration wanted a phase-in approach that would use the accreditation standards as the "vehicle for implementation." Dr. Finley noted that funding was still a question that needed to be answered and probably would "need to be looked at over a period of years."¹⁵²

At its May 1986 meeting the board of education approved the implementation of an elementary school guidance program over a four-year period beginning with the 1986-87 school year. The board also directed the DOE to revise the

¹⁵⁰S. John Davis, "Decision Brief to Governor Gerald L. Baliles Regarding Elementary Guidance Programs," 24 August 1987, 2.

¹⁵¹Gerald L. Baliles, Governor of Virginia, "State-of-the-State Address to the General Assembly of Virginia," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 14 January 1986, A-6.

¹⁵²Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 26 February 1986, 19.

Accreditation Standards to include requirements for elementary school guidance counselors.¹⁵³

Program information was sent to division superintendents in July 1986, and seven regional conferences for division superintendents, elementary supervisory staff, elementary principals, and elementary guidance counselors were held in the final three months of 1986. The revised Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia including a standard for elementary counseling was approved in the summer of 1987.¹⁵⁴

The final hurdle to the implementation of the elementary school guidance and counseling program was cleared in October 1987 when Governor Baliles and Secretary Finley approved a decision brief on the elementary guidance program prepared by the superintendent of public instruction. In the summary document Dr. Davis stated that progress toward full implementation of the elementary guidance initiative had been substantial with the program to be required statewide in the 1989-90 school year.

Davis' brief to the administration noted that the program did not have a fiscal impact on the state, because

¹⁵³Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1986," 57, 23 May 1986, 84.

¹⁵⁴"Implement an Elementary Guidance Program," Agency Head Performance Appraisal, 1987, B,1 B.1, in S. John Davis' personal papers, Midlothian, Virginia.

the elementary guidance positions could be included in the number of instructional personnel that the state currently funded (JLARC II). Davis did emphasize that eighty school divisions would need to reallocate funding already being received or would need to add additional local revenue to support the program.

Finally, Davis recommended that the department of education require certified guidance counselors or on a temporary basis allow personnel actively pursuing certification in elementary guidance to be employed by local school divisions. The Virginia School Boards Association took the position that localities should be allowed to satisfy the standard through the use of alternative staffing, i.e., personnel like social workers, psychologists or other pupil support instead of certified counselors.¹⁵⁵ When in October 1987 Secretary of Education Finley and Governor Baliles approved Dr. Davis' decision brief, they approved his recommendation on personnel.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵S. John Davis, "Decision Brief to Governor Gerald L. Baliles Regarding Elementary Guidance Program," 24 August 1987, 1-2.

¹⁵⁶"Implement an Elementary Guidance Program," Agency Head Performance Appraisal, 1987, 8.1 8.1.

Special Education

During the 1980s the number of identified special education students in Virginia continued to increase. By 1989, the last year of the Baliles administration, the number had grown to 105,000 students, an increase of more than 7,000 students from 1982-83, the first year of the Robb governorship. State funding increased correspondingly throughout the period. From the 1986-88 biennial budget to the 1988-90 budget, funding for special education increased from \$114 million to \$202 million. Funding for state-level technical assistance and monitoring in special education grew from \$1.2 million in 1986-88 to \$1.8 million in 1988-90.¹⁵⁷

In spite of many concerns raised about the severity of federal special education regulations, Virginia's special education regulations actually grew to exceed the federal requirements in a number of areas. The board of education approved for Virginia's schools, on the recommendation of Dr. Davis and DOE staff, regulations to implement the federal Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. State items that exceeded federal requirements included the

¹⁵⁷Gerald L. Baliles, Virginia Public Schools: Progress and A New Agenda, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988, 10.

following: (1) a child study committee required at each school, (2) an eligibility committee required to identify students with disabilities for service, (3) parent consent beyond initial placement and evaluation, (4) a free appropriate public education provided to children with disabilities ages 2-21 instead of 3-21, (5) parents given the opportunity to participate in the selection of assessment areas when a child is evaluated, (6) all parents given a copy of their child's individual education plan (IEP) and that plan must contain information regarding the Literacy Passport Test and Family Life Education Program, and, (7) each locality required to have a special education advisory committee.¹⁵⁸

The parents of special education students and special education advocacy groups strongly supported Virginia's regulations. However, many local school divisions had concerns about the restrictiveness of Virginia's requirements in comparison to federal law. Many people give Dr. Davis credit for Virginia's regulations exceeding federal ones.¹⁵⁹ Others have evaluated the Davis special education regulations as they did his administrative review

¹⁵⁸"Virginia's Special Education Regulations: Items That Exceed Federal Regulations," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1991, 1.

¹⁵⁹Harry L. Smith, telephone conversation, 4 March 1994.

service by avowing that with the money came "mandates that chafed."¹⁶⁰

Accountability

Accountability in education during the Baliles era was a given. The governor's modus operandi in governmental programming was "to keep score."¹⁶¹ He set goals, and then he followed up with agency heads at regular intervals asking for documentation as to progress on the goals that had been identified. In K-12 public education Secretary Finley was asked each year for a score-card evaluation of each of the sixty-eight identified issues. Accountability meant data gathering, and the secretary's office and the department were responsible for the collection.¹⁶²

The Administrative Review Loses Favor

The need for data to satisfy Governor Baliles' annual evaluation of the secretary of education's progress on administration goals in education led to dissatisfaction with the accountability process of the administrative review. For example, Dr. Finley would want to know how many

¹⁶⁰Joseph A. Spagnolo, Jr., interview, 7 January 1994.

¹⁶¹Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

¹⁶²Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

eighth graders were taking algebra I. Department of education staff would not know because they did not collect such data, and the administrative review did not help. ¹⁶³

The administrative review process was also bringing frustration to educators in local school divisions across the state. The administrative review process started as a program audit to give technical help to localities so that they could provide programs as intended by state and federal law and was made regulatory by the state board and the General Assembly. Dr. Fred Bateman, division superintendent in Chesapeake, commented, "Many division superintendents became frustrated as administrative review teams over-regulated during the last years before the administrative review was phased out."¹⁶⁴

The administrative review was very strong in process. It held school divisions accountable. However, according to Dr. William C. Bosher, it "received criticism when it could not produce coordination between compliance and quality. The review process was totally compliance with much about

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Bateman, telephone conversation with author, 12 February 1994.

papers and little about quality."¹⁶⁵

Accountability and the Commission on Excellence

Within the framework of growing dissatisfaction with the administrative review process, the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education addressed accountability as a measure of how effectively recommendations of the commission were carried out. Seven recommendations to achieve accountability were written into the commission's report.

The first recommendation dealt with the preparation of school personnel to implement the report. By July 19, 1987, local and state school board members would be required to participate in training programs, division superintendents would be required to take part in annual professional development activities, and school boards and local governing bodies would begin meeting together at least once a year for planning purposes.

A second consideration was a sharper definition of "who is responsible for what." By July 1, 1988, the governor and the legislature were to take action requiring the state to review and redefine the duties and responsibilities of the state board, the state superintendent, local school boards, local superintendents, and principals.

¹⁶⁵William C. Bosher, interview with author, Marion, Virginia, 19 August 1994.

Third and fourth, the commission would assign two new responsibilities to the state superintendent and the state board. The superintendent "would identify annually schools that are outstanding or educationally deficient; the board would approve criteria for each category and would oversee improvement plans of deficient schools." Also, the board and superintendent were to establish and fund two state grant programs to reward exceptional schools and to help deficient schools.

Fifth, the board of education needed the authority to consolidate school divisions that, given adequate notice and time to correct deficiencies, were not meeting the Standards of Quality. By July 1, 1987, procedures would be established to enable local school boards to remove teachers and principals who were not doing the job.

Recognizing student achievement as the "final indication of accountability," the commission urged use of the "few available national measures of achievement" and continued support of new efforts to provide state-by-state comparisons of student performance. Finally, the commission wanted the General Assembly to adopt and fund its recommendations, as appropriate, for inclusion in Virginia's Standards of Quality. The governor was asked to appoint an "oversight committee" in the fall of 1987 to review progress

in implementing the recommendations.¹⁶⁶

Outcome Accountability Begins

In 1987 the state board and state superintendent worked with the accountability recommendations as they revised the Standards of Quality to be submitted to the General Assembly in its 1988 session. By October 1987 the board had for final review the Standards of Quality, 1988-90, which mandated four accountability measures: (1) accreditation standards to include student outcome measures, (2) SOL objectives which specified what students were expected to achieve at each grade level, (3) remedial programs for literacy test failures and students in the bottom quartile on the state assessment program, and (4) a plan of corrective action for deficient schools.¹⁶⁷

The final revisions to the SOQ by the board of education requested that "criteria for determining the effectiveness of the Commonwealth's public schools" be developed. The criteria were to be based upon the outcomes of schooling and were to become a part of the accreditation standards. The criteria also would recognize schools and

¹⁶⁶Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education, Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, October 1986, 24-29

¹⁶⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1987," 58, 22 October 1987, 124.

school divisions performing well and identify schools most in need of improvement.¹⁶⁸

Throughout 1986-1987 Dr. Davis and the department of education worked on a program to identify annually schools that were exceptional and schools that were deficient. By the late summer of 1986, before the report of the commission became final, Dr. Davis had drafted a program which proposed an assessment of individual schools to measure the quality of education offered in school divisions. The state superintendent would collect data for the assessment.

The assessment process itself was two-tiered. It required an assessment of all schools on selected measures in three areas in Tier I: (1) achievement test results; (2) course offerings, disparity, dropouts, graduates, and marketable skills; and (3) accreditation. In Tier II assessment would be undertaken whenever a school was found not to have met the most significant short range input criteria found in Tier I. Tier II assessment would then be substituted for Tier I assessment. Assessment in Tier II would permit an examination of the degree of commitment to and movement toward meeting the criteria. The state

¹⁶⁸Educational Performance Recognition: A Proposal to the Virginia Board of Education, Virginia Department of Education and Educational Performance Recognition Project, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, 30 June 1989, 3.

superintendent then could use Tier II data to recommend commendation of a school or to find a school educationally deficient.¹⁶⁹

Busy with other recommendations of the commission, the DOE did little more in the way of planning than was evidenced in criteria for commendable and deficient schools found in a work copy readied by the spring of 1987. DOE staff recommended that the superintendent of public instruction be given responsibility for identifying schools that were exceptional and schools that were educationally deficient. Staff also advocated developing criteria which measured both inputs and outcomes of the schooling process. Input measurement would be the extent to which schools complied with the accreditation standards. Recommended outcome measures included normed testing results, attendance, and dropouts.¹⁷⁰

Educational Performance Recognition Program

By 1988 it was apparent to the secretary of education that the department of education "would not or could not come up with a workable outcome accountability program."

¹⁶⁹S. John Davis, "Memo to Members of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education," 28 July 1986.

¹⁷⁰"Commendable and Deficient Schools Selection Criteria," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 14 April 1987.

Therefore, Secretary Finley and Dr. Gary Henry, an associate professor in public administration at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), drafted a plan to serve as a starting point. Dr. Henry was then sent to the department as project director for the accountability program to work with Dr. Davis and DOE staff to modify and eventually implement the program.¹⁷¹

In the official version of the history of the Educational Performance Recognition (EPR) Program, Dr. Davis is included in the development of the initial draft. Accordingly, "the Secretary of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction jointly issued a discussion draft which initiated the development of an outcome indicator system, called Educational Performance Recognition (EPR) which was to include a balanced set of indicators to measure the performance and progress of the educational system." The mission of EPR was "to reorient the accountability system away from compliance and toward educational outcomes" in order to improve student learning.¹⁷²

One of the principles embedded in the draft was the

¹⁷¹Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

¹⁷²Educational Performance Recognition: A Proposal to the Virginia Board of Education, Virginia Department of Education and Educational Performance Recognition Project, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, 30 June 1990, 3.

involvement of a cross-section of individuals interested in education in the development of the program. Four work groups were envisioned: superintendents, school board members, teachers, and others involved in education. Then, public forums would be scheduled, and finally the outcome indicator system would be field tested. The board of education was asked to consider and adopt guidelines for a performance recognition system by October 1989.¹⁷³

Outcome indicators were obviously the hub of EPR and had to be incorporated into the accountability system used to identify effective practices. Spinning off the hub were six functions that were needed to develop, maintain, and utilize the indicators: research, reporting, accreditation and compliance monitoring, incentives and recognition, effective practices, and evaluation and technical assistance.

A three-phase EPR program development schedule was set. In phase one, fall 1988 to fall 1989, project directors selected indicators, designed methods for fair comparison, and received guidance from the board of education. In phase two, fall 1989 to fall 1990, project directors collected and organized data on indicators, developed reporting formats, finalized school clusters, field tested, and recommended

¹⁷³Ibid., 7.

changes to the accreditation standards. In phase three, fall 1990 to fall 1991, the project leaders piloted effective practices, piloted evaluation and technical assistance, and finalized guidelines for incentives and rewards. Full implementation was scheduled for the 1991-92 school year.¹⁷⁴

Under the direction of Secretary Finley and Dr. Davis, the department of education and an EPR Project Team from Virginia Commonwealth University assumed responsibility for the development, field testing, and implementation. Dr. Gary Henry was project director, and Dr. James McMillan, an associate professor at VCU, served as Henry's chief assistant. The VCU team did most of the day-to-day work of collecting data, building concepts, leading work groups, writing objectives, providing statistical analysis, and writing and rewriting various drafts of the program. The DOE primarily served in an oversight and coordination capacity with the VCU team.¹⁷⁵

The administration and the VCU project team set out to build a system of outcome indicators based on achievement and attainment to refocus the accountability system in Virginia. "It's part of the national movement to give local

¹⁷⁴Ibid., 7-10.

¹⁷⁵"EPR Responsibilities," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 3 August 1989, 1-3.

autonomy to schools. The idea is not to mandate practice, but to hold schools accountable for their outcomes," said Dr. James McMillan, a member of the development team.¹⁷⁶

McMillan further described the process:

By measuring performance EPR will help schools diagnose areas that need strengthening. It will identify educational practices that are working and encourage their dissemination to other parts of the state. It will redirect the efforts of the Department of Education away from monitoring compliance and toward providing technical and financial assistance to school systems needing improvement. At the same time it will lift burdensome paperwork requirements at the school and school division level.¹⁷⁷

The VCU and DOE development teams produced an EPR Program that had several distinct features. One was the identification of seven educational objectives and for each objective six to fourteen outcome indicators that showed whether a school was doing a good job of meeting the objectives. Objectives included (1) preparing students for college, (2) preparing students for work, (3) increasing the graduation rate, (4) increasing special education students' living skills and opportunities, (5) educating elementary school students, (6) educating middle school students, and (7) educating secondary school students.

To determine how well a school was preparing students

¹⁷⁶Staff, "Educational Performance Recognition, Virginia Journal of Education, 83 no. 6 (March 1990), 6.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 7.

for college, for example, statisticians were to collect data on the percentage of students receiving the advanced studies diploma, taking the SAT, completing foreign language courses and algebra I by the ninth grade, taking advanced placement and college level courses, and scoring in the upper quartile of eighth and eleventh grade achievement tests. Also to be tabulated were the number of graduates who had to take remedial courses in college, the college grade point averages of high school graduates who attended Virginia colleges, and the number of minority students who took the SAT and received the advanced studies diploma.¹⁷⁸

One of the most debated components of EPR was the comparison of the performance and progress of school divisions using comparison band benchmarks. Employing a sophisticated statistical methodology, the developers set up fourteen groups into which each school division in Virginia was placed according to similarities in characteristics. The variables reflected community, school system, and student characteristics. Program developers also planned to cluster most of the state's 1,750 schools in groups of twenty to thirty, using the same kind of variables used for

¹⁷⁸Educational Performance Recognition Program, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia (October 1989), 1-15.

division comparisons.¹⁷⁹

Rewarding performance progress was an important part of the conceptual development of EPR. Five percent of schools (87 schools) were to be selected each year based on "an equal weighting between performance on the indicators and progress based on the indicators." In addition to a plaque, banner, dinner, and a ceremony, schools would get a monetary reward of \$4,500 (elementary) and \$10,500 (high school).¹⁸⁰ Dr. Davis told the state board in April 1989 that school divisions doing outstanding jobs would also be recognized with financial awards and a special flag would be designed to be presented to the top schools.¹⁸¹

Schools that needed improvement were to receive technical assistance and additional funding. The bottom five percent were considered to be in need of improvement. Another component was to improve schools by transferring effective practices. The department would offer workshops and on-site support to schools wishing to adopt practices that were effective elsewhere.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹Ibid., 17-20.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., 22.

¹⁸¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1989," 60, 28 April 1989.

¹⁸²"Educational Performance Recognition," Virginia Journal of Education, 83 no. 6 (March 1990), 11.

Several of the work groups reacting to each phase of the development of EPR were very concerned about how to ensure that fair comparisons were obtained. For example, one could not compare the 1990 fifth grade class's test scores to those of the 1989 fifth grade class because the students were not the same. Nor was it proper to compare the achievement of students from school divisions with less affluent, less educated populations to divisions and schools whose parents were very affluent and more highly educated. Dr. Davis advocated to Dr. Henry the need to add the collection of data on a school division's economic and education standing. Because of Dr. Davis' insistence the decision was made to collect additional information about the community which school divisions served. The following types of data were then gathered: education level of adults, income level of families, local composite index of the school division, and the number of students eligible for free and reduced school meals.¹⁸³

Following a presentation by Dr. Gary Henry, the board of education had its final review of EPR in June 1989¹⁸⁴ and approved the guidelines for field testing in September

¹⁸³Davis, telephone conversation with author, 26 February 1995.

¹⁸⁴Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1989," 60, 24 June 1989, 46.

1989.¹⁸⁵ Strikingly similar to the development of the 1988-90 biennial budget, EPR development showed the changed relationship between the state superintendent and department staff and the office of the secretary of education. The executive branch took a much more active role in the day-to-day work of the department of education than it had in previous administrations.

The Administration's Score Card

Governor Baliles' management approach was to build accountability measures into each aspect of state government. He insisted that managers of each state agency report progress annually. In K-12 public education a major portion of how the governor kept score centered around the actual numbers of what was happening with students because of changes made in requirements and programs. The following paragraphs summarize the governor's score card:

In mathematics Virginia's students took more courses and more difficult courses. By 1988-89 over ninety percent of students in grades 8-12 were enrolled in a mathematics course as compared to eighty percent in 1982-83. Algebra enrollment grew from twenty-five percent to twenty-nine percent, geometry enrollment grew from sixteen percent to

¹⁸⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1989," 60, 27 September 1989, 67.

twenty-four percent, and higher math and advanced placement enrollment grew from twenty-eight percent to thirty-seven percent from 1982-83 to 1988-89.

Science enrollment also increased as students took more science and more advanced science. Earth science enrollment increased from fifty percent to eighty-six percent, biology enrollment went from seventy-seven percent to ninety-nine percent, chemistry enrollment from thirty-six percent to fifty-six percent, and physics enrollment increased from sixteen percent to twenty-four percent from 1982-83 to 1988-89.

Foreign language enrollment increased dramatically. In fact, it increased so much that by 1988-89 Virginia had tied Utah as the top state in the percentage of high school students studying a foreign language. Enrollment in all foreign languages increased from thirty-two percent in 1982-83 to forty-six percent in 1988-89. The number of Virginia's students taking Western European languages such as French, German, and Spanish increased as did the number of students taking newly offered languages such as Japanese and Russian.¹⁸⁶

The administration also judged its work on the

¹⁸⁶Gerald L. Baliles, Governor of Virginia, Virginia's Public Schools: Progress and A New Agenda, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1989, 3-7.

implementation of the thirty-six recommendations made by the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education. By the end of Governor Baliles' term Secretary Finley calculated that all of the thirty-six items were initiated and time lines were set for total implementation. Four year old educational opportunities for at-risk children had been increased, but funding was not yet sufficient for full implementation. There were also thirty other initiatives in both K-12 public education and higher education that had been on the administration's agenda. Secretary Finley reported that sixty-six of these goals had been completed by the end of the Baliles era.¹⁸⁷

Test Scores

Throughout the Baliles years accountability was also expressed by various test scores. Table 13 is a comparison of 1985-86 through 1989-90 results of the Virginia statewide testing program. Achievement test scores in grades 4, 8, and 11 show small increases in language arts, mathematics, and reading. Reading scores in grade 4 had dropped in 1987-88 when the state changed achievement tests. After 1987-88 Virginia used the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), which replaced the Science Research Associates (SRA) Achievement Test.

¹⁸⁷Finley, interview, 29 April 1994.

Table 13

Percentile Ranks of Mean Achievement Scores for Students in the State Testing Program, 1987-88 through 1990-91

Grade		1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91
4	Reading	53	54	54	54
	Mathematics	56	60	56	62
	Language Arts	60	60	62	62
8	Reading	54	54	55	55
	Mathematics	56	56	57	56
	Language Arts	57	57	59	60
11	Reading	58	57	56	58
	Mathematics	56	56	57	58
	Language Arts	62	61	62	63

Note: Data from Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, nos. 23 through 26, 1987-88 through 1990-91. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills was used during this timeframe.

Virginia continued to participate in the testing of eleventh grade students in the National Assessment of Education Progress as promoted by the Southern Regional Education Board. In 1987 eleventh graders in Virginia and seven other Southeastern states were tested in math and American history. Virginia eleventh graders, both blacks and whites, had higher scores than blacks and whites in each of the other seven Southeastern states. Virginia was likewise the only state among the eight participating Southeastern states in which black students achieved a higher score than the national average for black students. On the math test the average score for Virginia eleventh graders was 299.1, significantly higher than the 289.0 of the national sample and the 282.0 of the Southeast. In Virginia the mean score on the history test was 299.3 compared with 283.4 for the national mean and 278.2 for the Southeast mean.¹⁸⁸

During the final seven years of Dr. Davis' state superintendency Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores improved even though the number of students taking the test increased. Verbal SAT scores improved from 426 to 430, math scores improved from 462 to 472, and total scores improved from 888 to 902. Nationally, verbal scores declined from

¹⁸⁸Charles Cox, "State Students Top National Averages," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 30 October 1987, B-1.

427 to 424, math scores rose from 467 to 476, and total scores rose from 894 to 900.

The dropout rate and the percentage continuing education after high school for Virginia's students changed positively during the Baliles years. The dropout rate dropped one full percentage point from 1985-86 to 1990-91. Correspondingly, 65.2 percent of high school graduates in Virginia continued their education at two or four year colleges or at other institutions of learning in 1985-86 and that percentage grew to 77.1 in 1990-91.

Teachers' Ratings of Reform Efforts

The changes in education during the Baliles years were numerous. They included revised teacher training programs requiring a liberal arts major and allowing no more than eighteen semester hours in professional education courses, increased high school requirements for graduation, toughened minimum requirements for sixth graders in the literacy passport testing program, revised objectives for student learners in an expanded SOL program, and increased emphasis in technology and international education.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching conducted a survey of classroom teachers in Virginia and across the nation in November and December of 1987 to get reactions to the reform efforts. Virginia's teachers

generally gave the efforts a strong passing grade. Thirty-six percent rated state reform at A or B, fifty-four percent rated efforts at C, and only ten percent rated efforts at D or F. Nationally, the figures were thirty-one percent A or B, fifty percent at C, and nineteen percent at D or F. Virginia's five percent A rating was exceeded only by South Carolina's six percent rating of A.

Nearly three of every four Virginia teachers who responded to the survey said students' math skills were better, and sixty-eight percent rated reading and writing skills improved. However, the teachers indicated that reform had not helped improve morale among teachers. Fifty-two percent said morale was worse since reform began while twenty-five percent said it was better, and twenty-four percent said there was no change.¹⁸⁹

Management

During the Baliles administration, management of the Virginia Department of Education was under closer scrutiny than it had been in the Dalton and Robb eras. Governor Dalton and Secretary Gilley had left the management of the department to the state superintendent and believed that DOE had served its role well. Governor Robb and Secretary

¹⁸⁹Joe Taylor, "School Changes in State Appear to Be Working," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 5 September 1988, B-5.

Casteen had worked in unison with Superintendent Davis, and the department was seen by the administration as a loyal, cooperative extension of the executive branch in charge of K-12 educational issues.

However, in the mid-1980s some dissatisfaction with the department of education began to surface in Richmond's governmental circles and in local school divisions across the state. The delay in the reappointment of Dr. Davis as superintendent of public instruction was a manifestation in part of this slowly rising discord. Some advisors close to Governor Baliles believed that the DOE was not well run. The governor had a strong management focus, as did much of his staff, and he did "not sense" that Dr. Davis was as "strong in management" as he was in other areas.¹⁹⁰ Secretary Finley believed that the department had some weakness; for example, as a "research organization" he thought that "the department was dysfunctional."¹⁹¹

There was also a feeling in state government that "nobody knows what DOE is for."¹⁹² This idea was discussed on several occasions when Governor Baliles' "Kitchen Cabinet" met every other Sunday night. This informal group

¹⁹⁰Baliles, telephone conversation, 1 September 1994.

¹⁹¹Finley, interview, 29 April 1994.

¹⁹²David K. McCloud, telephone conversation, 28 January 1995.

of friends and advisors included a variety of people like David McCloud, chief of staff for both Baliles and Robb; William Thomas, prominent attorney and Fairfax County neighbor of the Robbs, whose wife Suzanne served two terms on the board of education; Alan Diamonstein, leader in the Senate of Virginia; and Anthony Troy, who had served Virginia as an appointed attorney general.

The Virginia Department of Education was organized in the late nineteenth century to help the chief state school officer administer the education policies set by the board of education. The original mission was limited primarily to gathering and reporting statistics. Later the duties of the department expanded to include inspection and regulation. DOE's role also became one of establishing and improving programs and developing policy as well as maintaining its more traditional roles.¹⁹³

By the mid-1980s changes in education, government, and management began to make the previously clear role of the department somewhat murky. The Baliles administration, and the two which followed it, would begin to search for a clearer definition of the role of the department of education.

¹⁹³Educational Governance in the States, The Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, DC, February 1983, iii.

Department Organization

During the Baliles years, 1986-90, the organization of the department underwent little change. The "cabinet level" staff configuration of two deputy superintendents, one associate superintendent, and three assistant superintendents remained in place for the first two years of the period. A fourth assistant superintendent was added as a recommendation from the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education.

One deputy superintendent continued to have responsibilities for the direction of curriculum, instruction, and personnel services. The second deputy superintendent still was in charge of compliance and field services. The associate superintendent had charge of financial and support services. The two original assistant superintendents at the beginning of the administration were over general and vocational education and special education and pupil personnel services respectively. The additional assistant superintendent was given the responsibility for instructional technology.

At the next level in the departmental hierarchy, administrative directors worked under the supervision of the various superintendent-level managers. Throughout the Baliles administration there were seven such positions. Other lower level positions in the organization remained in

place with little change throughout the period.

Department Personnel

The top managers in S. John Davis' leadership team in the department underwent little change in the Baliles administration. William J. Burkholder continued to serve as deputy superintendent for compliance and field services until the end of 1987. In January 1988 Dr. Davis recommended that Mr. Burkholder be employed until June to support board of education members working on implementing top recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education. Myron E. Cale was asked to serve as acting deputy superintendent responsible for Burkholder's duties until July 1, 1988.¹⁹⁴

Cale's acting deputy superintendent's role lasted past the July 1 date originally stipulated. Not until the December 1988 state board meeting did Dr. Davis introduce Dr. Vincent C. Cibbarelli, division superintendent in Charlottesville, as the new deputy superintendent for compliance and field service effective March 1, 1989.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 59, 15 January 1988, 9.

¹⁹⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 59, 9 December 1988, 86.

Burkholder, and then Cale, had responsibility for field work outside the department, concentrating on local school systems and division superintendents. The administrative review process fell under their purview.¹⁹⁶

Dr. Everette B. Howerton, Jr., remained as deputy superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Acknowledging his status with Dr. Davis, the addition of the word "chief" was made in front of deputy superintendent in depicting Dr. Howerton's title.¹⁹⁷ Dr. Howerton worked with numerous curricular and instructional issues during this period, but none was more important than his leadership in the development and eventual implementation of the Family Life Education Program.

Myron E. Cale continued as Dr. Davis' chief financial manager in the department as deputy superintendent of financial and support services. Dr. Callie P. Shingleton remained in her instructional leadership role as assistant superintendent for general and vocational education. The slot for the assistant superintendent for special education and pupil personnel services was vacant in 1986 and 1987, but in 1988 Dr. Rondle E. Edwards, division superintendent

¹⁹⁶William J. Burkholder, telephone conversation with author, 14 October 1994.

¹⁹⁷Virginia Educational Directory, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1988.

in Portsmouth, was named to the position. Filling a mandate from the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education, Dr. Ida J. Hill was promoted to the newly created position of assistant superintendent for instructional technology in 1988.¹⁹⁸

The number of DOE staff positions increased slightly during the Baliles years. The 1986-88 biennial budget provided for 431 full-time positions in 1986-87, a 0.7 percent increase over 1985-86, and for 433 full-time positions in 1987-88, a .5 percent increase over the first year of the biennium. The 1988-90 biennial budget increased the number of full-time DOE positions to 441 in 1988-89 and to 443 in 1989-90. The increase was 2.25 percent for the biennium.¹⁹⁹

In 1987 an affirmative action plan was initiated in the department of education to enhance equal employment opportunities. In September 1987 the department of education's "Analysis of Employment Profile Form" revealed 400 positions were actually filled. The gender and ethnic distribution for these positions was as follows: white male, 113; white female, 114; minority male, 43; and minority female, 70. In July 1989 the distribution for 406

¹⁹⁸Ibid, 1986, 1987, 1988.

¹⁹⁹"Historical Maximum Employment Level Overview," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1986-1990.

positions filled at that time had changed thusly: white male, 121; white female, 169; minority male, 30; and minority female, 86. White males, white females, and minority females had all increased in number while the number of minority males decreased. Major gains for minority females were in office clerical positions while gains for white males and females were more evenly distributed. Minority males lost jobs in the clerical category.²⁰⁰ Table 14 is the gender and ethnic count for all classifications employed in the department in July 1987 and July 1989.

At the cabinet level in 1982 there were four deputy, assistant, or associate superintendents--all four white males--and three administrative directors--all three white males. In 1989 there were six deputy, assistant, or associate superintendents--two white males, one white female, one black male, one black female, and one vacant--and there were seven administrative directors--three white males, two white females, one black male, and zero black females.²⁰¹

Dr. Davis' management philosophy with these personnel continued much as it had previously. He relied heavily on

²⁰⁰"Analysis of Employment Profile Forms," Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, September 1987, July 1989.

²⁰¹Virginia Educational Directory, 1982, 1989.

Table 14
Analysis of Employment in the Department of Education

Classification	1987				
	Total a Positions	White. Male	White. Female	Minor. Male	Minor. Female
Officials and Administrators	68	39	15	9	5
Professionals	161	65	59	20	17
Technicians	19	4	11	1	3
Para-professionals	21	1	14	0	6
Office and Clerical	128	3	73	13	39
Skilled Craft Workers	3	1	2	0	0
TOTAL	400	113	114	43	70
Classification	1989				
	Total a Positions	White. Male	White. Female	Minor. Male	Minor. Female
Officials and Administrators	74	41	20	9	4
Professionals	170	71	60	20	19
Technicians	13	2	7	0	4
Para-professionals	20	2	14	0	4
Office and Clerical	126	4	66	1	55
Skilled Craft Workers	3	1	2	0	0
TOTAL	406	121	169	30	86

a Does not include vacant positions.

Note: From Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Analysis of Employment Profile Form" in Affirmative Action Plan for Equal Employment Opportunity, 1987-1989.

his top support staff. Especially influential were Dr. Howerton, Dr. Shingleton, Mr. Cale, and Mr. Burkholder in their respective areas of responsibility. Dr. Davis continued to seek input from staff before final decisions were made. He also had high expectations of top staff and often expected them to work from eight in the morning until eight or nine at night as he often did.²⁰²

Davis also continued to be actively involved in program and policy development and implementation in the department. He had been a "hands on" manager since his Fairfax days,²⁰³ and he continued this style of management in the Baliles administration with Family Life Education being an excellent example of his method of operation.²⁰⁴

A succinct description of another aspect of life in the department of education has been made by Jack Burkholder.

He reported:

Secretary of Education Don Finley was also actively involved in DOE management. His interference affected Jack's style. Certain things had to be done, and Jack got them done cooperatively. Davis deserved a lot of credit for being able to work as he did in changing times. He did not say it is Don Finley's fault that we must do this this way. Of course, always in the background was our question, how much of this was the governor's

²⁰²Shingleton, telephone conversation, 3 February 1994.

²⁰³Burkholder, telephone conversation. 14 October 1994.

²⁰⁴Howerton, telephone conversation, 11 March 1994.

doings?²⁰⁵

However, according to Dr. Vincent C. Cibbarelli, who became deputy superintendent in 1989, morale in the department was good during Dr. Davis' last year as state superintendent. The cabinet level staff worked well together and in concert with Dr. Davis. Davis remained supportive, open in meetings, and a "hands on" leader who did delegate; and he was concerned about people.²⁰⁶

Agency Head Performance Appraisal

Governor Gerald L. Baliles added an evaluation procedure for agency heads soon after he took office. The performance appraisal of an agency head like Superintendent of Public Instruction S. John Davis was centered around results proposed for the secretarial area of education. Secretarial goals were established for education, and then program objectives for service delivery, short range and long range, were set.

For example, in the review period July 1, 1987, to July 30, 1988, eight secretarial goals were written for Dr. Finley. Among these goals were the following: (1) making substantial progress in placing Virginia in the first rank

²⁰⁵Burkeholder, telephone conversation, 14 October 1994.

²⁰⁶Cibbarelli, telephone conversation, 20 March 1995.

of states in the quality of public elementary and secondary education, (2) developing and implementing a strategic planning and management process to enhance the agency's use of available resources in providing services, (3) encouraging accelerated recruitment, promotion, and career development of women and minorities in accordance with Equal Employment Opportunities and affirmative action policies of the state, (4) evaluating state administrative activities and developing ways to enhance efficiency, service delivery, and productivity; and (5) developing initiatives to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of state government.

Dr. Davis' performance appraisal document had been prepared jointly by the superintendent and the secretary. Two months before the review year ended, Secretary Finley sent Davis a memo arranging a meeting for the evaluation of DOE's "progress and performance." Davis was to come to the meeting in Finley's office with documentation "you believe will assist our task."

Davis had six program objectives for the review year and ten long-range program service delivery objectives. During the review period Davis was to recommend a program and develop timelines for the implementation of the approved recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education. He also was to review and revise school accreditation and quality standards to become effective July

1, 1988, and to review the quality of special education programs to improve local compliance with the law and regulations for these programs. The final short range goal was to implement revised procedures for the literary loan fund.

Long range program goals included implementing an elementary guidance program, continuing to implement the recommendations in the report of the Commission on Excellence, continuing to revise and improve the accreditation standards and SOQ, and continuing to revise and improve the state testing program. Davis was also to implement the department's technology plan and the department's communications and automation transition plan. Also, on Davis' list of long-range goals were revising teacher certification requirements, providing assistance to the Commission on Efficiency in State Government, implementing measures to reduce paperwork and inefficiency, and reviewing all existing agency regulations and implementing measures to reduce burdens imposed by agency regulations.²⁰⁷

Of particular significance to this study were the management actions or operational objectives that Dr. Finley

²⁰⁷"Program Objectives, Service Delivery--S. John Davis," Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, Review Period July 1, 1987, to July 30, 1988.

and Dr. Davis had established "to improve management and operation of the agency." Four review period goals were set to include the following: (1) striving to award at least five percent of the total dollar amount of procurement contracts to minority firms during fiscal year 1987-88, (2) affording equal opportunity to any group or individual employed by or seeking employment with the department and improving current minority staffing ratios within the department, (3) notifying the secretary of obstacles which might hinder or impede the actions specified in the agency's multi-year objectives, and (4) organizing and staffing the department to lead educational progress in Virginia.

Long-range management actions included (1) monitoring and adjusting the organizational structure of the agency including job descriptions to best meet established goals and objectives, (2) continuing to implement measures designed to improve communications and data exchange, (3) updating the agency's personnel handbook, and (4) using an employees advisory council to monitor the employee environment and to implement measures to foster positive employee relations.²⁰⁸

Dr. Davis' evaluation by Dr. Finley indicated that he

²⁰⁸"Management Actions, Operational Objectives, S. John Davis," Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, Review Period July 1, 1987, to July 30, 1988.

had made "substantial progress in placing Virginia in the top rank in the quality of public education." Cited as documentation was action on the report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education which recommended thirty-six items needed to make Virginia one of the nation's best states in public education. By June 30, 1988, "fourteen have been completed, thirteen are nearing completion, four are currently being planned for implementation, and four are awaiting legislative action." Only one had not been acted upon by the board of education and state superintendent. Dr. Finley also noted in Davis' behalf that "SRA test scores have risen considerably since 1981-82, Virginia's total score on the SAT has exceeded the national total score for the third consecutive year, and the department has participated in a national-level project to develop indicators for measuring educational progress."²⁰⁹

Documentation in the review period evaluation gave evidence that Dr. Davis had made progress toward meeting goals. Progress in affirmative action was satisfactory in five of six Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) classifications. Only in the classification of skilled craft workers were active and aggressive recruitment efforts

²⁰⁹"Evaluation, S. John Davis," Agency Head Performance Appraisal, Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, Review Period, July 1, 1987 to July 30, 1988.

needed. Dr. Davis did not meet the target of awarding at least five percent of total dollar amount for procurement contracts to minority firms. The agency awarded 3.53 percent of the total dollar amount to minorities.

Two major concerns in communications had proposed solutions agreed upon by Secretary Finley and Dr. Davis. Concern one was the heavy reporting burden on the schools and divisions especially in the areas of vocational education and special education. Concern two was the collection of the same data from schools and divisions by different units within the department. The proposed solution for both problems was to "implement an electronic communications network linking together all divisions and the Department of Education."

Dr. Davis did establish an Employee Advisory Council, which met on a regular basis and made recommendations as appropriate. Davis also reacted positively to a recommendation by the state internal auditor that Joseph D. Roberts, the department's director of audit services, report to the board of education in addition to reporting to the state superintendent.²¹⁰

At the end of the performance appraisal period the

²¹⁰"Evaluation, S. John Davis," Agency Head Performance Appraisal, Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, Review Period July 1, 1987, to July 30, 1988.

secretary was to complete an assessment of results. After discussion with the agency head and after a review of documentation provided by the agency head, the secretary was to make appropriate comments in describing the performance of the agency head in accomplishing targeted program objectives. Finally, the secretary was to rate the agency head as having accomplished each objective in a manner that was "exceptional, effective, or needs improvement." Such ratings are considered confidential and are not available for public review. The "Assessment of Results" section of Dr. Davis' personal copy of his "Performance Appraisal" has no ratings marked.²¹¹

Governor Baliles and Secretary Finley rated Dr. Davis' overall performance as effective; however, they both had concerns about the department of education and its overall ability as organized to meet the needs of public education. At the end of 1988 Dr. Finley began to work with Dr. Davis to hire an outside consulting firm to study the state board and DOE and to make recommendations for improvement.²¹² Yet Davis' personnel evaluation indicated that he was accomplishing objectives adequately.

²¹¹"Assessment of Results, John Davis," Agency Head Performance Appraisal, Department of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, Review Period July 1, 1987, to July 30, 1988.

²¹²Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

The Price Waterhouse Study

In response to the governor and the secretary Davis developed and the board approved a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a combined study of the board of education, the state superintendent, and the department of education with the objective of helping Virginia build on its success of recent years. The purpose of the study was to identify "improved decision-making processes, management practices, and organizational frameworks of the board of education, the superintendent of public instruction, and the department of education." An assessment of "legal responsibilities and roles of the parties involved" and a consideration of "how interrelationships between state and local school leadership could be strengthened" were also included in the RFP.²¹³

Six firms responded to the RFP and were evaluated on criteria that included experience, references, expertise, approach, workplan, and cost. An evaluation committee of four members reviewed the RFP's and assigned scores to the criteria. Timothy J. Sullivan and Lewis M. Nelson, Jr., from the board of education; Myron E. Cale, from the department of education; and Gary Henry, acting as an external reviewer, selected the top two firms for

²¹³"Request for Proposal," Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia, 12 January 1989, 1-3.

interviewers. Price Waterhouse and Cresap representatives were interviewed on March 14, 1989, and the evaluation committee selected Price Waterhouse as its first choice.²¹⁴

Price Waterhouse's Office of Government Services, Washington, DC, and a subcontractor, Pelavin Associates, were then hired by the board of education to make the requested study. A report entitled Meeting Leadership Challenges was submitted to the board of education and to the superintendent of public instruction on December 4, 1989. Findings and recommendations were divided into board-related and department-oriented sections.

Board-related findings and recommendations were four in number. First, the board was to articulate a vision of education for the Commonwealth. Second, the board needed to focus resources and activities more effectively. To accomplish this second recommendation the board needed to institute a formal strategic planning process, strengthen specific duties of the board's president, employ board liaison staff (a board executive), interrelate with the state superintendent in his role as the chief executive officer of the department, and rotate membership on standing committees of the board. Third, the board needed to address

²¹⁴Margaret Roberts, "Memorandum for the Record, Chronology: RFP for a Comprehensive Performance Audit of Policies and Management Practices of the Board of Education and the Department of Education," 16 March 1989, 1.

non-academic needs of Virginia's students through collaborative efforts of state and local entities. Fourth, the board had to formalize relationships with key state and local leaders. Suggestions made to accomplish this end included meeting with the governor-elect soon after the election, holding a carefully focused retreat with key legislators and staff on the education and appropriation committees, and establishing regular communications with locally elected officials and school division leaders.²¹⁵

Department-oriented findings and recommendations were centered around four topics. First, organizational designs for the 1990s had to become more information based, have flatter structure and greater delegation of authority, have more flexible structures, measure results by responsibility center, and reward excellence.

Second, technical assistance needed to be oriented to provide more on-site, customized assistance instead of the mass-audience assistance in the past (statewide conferences, brochures). To further this approach the department needed to increase the use of school division personnel by organizing and supporting regionally-based teams of local practitioners and by adding more internships and exchange

²¹⁵Price Waterhouse, Meeting Leadership Challenges: Report to the Virginia Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, 4 December 1989, I-4, I-5, I-6.

programs to infuse field expertise into the department. Also, in improving technical assistance the department needed to encourage local links between individual school divisions and nearby institutions of higher learning.

Third, the department of education needed to establish or strengthen key functions by creating a small planning unit to develop planning assumptions, assist in strategic plan preparation, track results, and integrate program-board planning efforts. Also, DOE needed to establish policy research and program evaluation capabilities to evaluate efficacy of program efforts and to analyze budget options. The current management information systems capabilities for both internal information analysis and technical assistance to school divisions needed to be strengthened.

Fourth, several organizational structure issues were identified: (1) A broad review of organizational structure should be made. (2) Organizational framework should be changed from being built around educational disciplines to revolving around programs. (3) The vertical chain of command should be flattened. (4) A consistent approach in organizing to achieve key objectives should be developed. To achieve these changes three more recommendations were made: regional offices should be eliminated except in Southwestern Virginia, and those in that area should be placed under the control of a single field director; the

existing two layers immediately beneath the deputy superintendents should be consolidated into one layer; and a process of team building among internal units in the department should be started and gradually combined into a programmatic, less single-discipline structure.²¹⁶

In its regular December 1989 meeting the board of education discussed the Price Waterhouse report. Dr. Thomas Gorsuch of Waynesboro made and James Dyke of Keswick seconded a motion for the board to develop a position description and begin a search for a board executive as recommended in the report. The board executive would report to the state superintendent, serve as a liaison to the state board, facilitate board business, and provide planning and follow up capabilities to the board.²¹⁷

The recommendation for the addition of a board executive was an unusual one; however, the Price Waterhouse report envisioned the position as one that would help strengthen the board of education in its constitutional and statutory roles and responsibilities and further delineate the relationship the superintendent of public instruction would have with the board. Board and superintendent

²¹⁶Price Waterhouse, Meeting Leadership Challenges: Report to the Virginia Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, 4 December 1989, I-7, I-8, I-9.

²¹⁷Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1988," 59, 5 December 1989, 82.

relationships were defined in the report as follows:

(1) The board has primary responsibility for setting public education policy. The superintendent can be assigned duties by it to execute policy. (2) The board does not appoint the superintendent and has no responsibility for administrative oversight of the department as does the superintendent. (3) Both the board and the superintendent have fiduciary responsibilities to ensure that reasonable controls and information flows are established regarding the execution of educational policies and programs. (4) The board has the latitude to, and should, delegate operational aspects of its duties to the superintendent. It cannot totally delegate decision making powers. The board's focus should be to determine initial policy and periodically assure that policies are appropriately followed.²¹⁸

The Price Waterhouse report and initial board action came just weeks before Dr. Davis' planned retirement. Therefore, the major impetus for implementing the report would come in the early 1990s during the state superintendency of Dr. Joseph A. Spagnolo.

Summary

After a delay of several months Governor Gerald L.

²¹⁸Price Waterhouse, I-3, I-4.

Baliles reappointed S. John Davis as state superintendent to work with Secretary of Education Donald J. Finley. Although the relationship between Superintendent Davis and the executive branch was not as close as it had been in the Robb administration, Dr. Davis continued to work effectively with the board of education, the General Assembly, and various education interest groups.

The Baliles administration saw major gains in funding for education, significant increases in teacher's salaries, and two major studies analyzing funding of the Standards of Quality. JLARC I established the cost of full funding of SOQ, and JLARC II made recommendations concerning issues related to the distribution of funds to local school divisions.

The Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education issued a report urging sweeping changes in the state's public school system. Thirty-six proposals in the report became the crux of the educational initiatives during the Baliles era. Also important were the development of the potentially explosive Family Life Education Program and the growth of special education programs featuring regulations more restrictive than federal ones.

In accountability the Administrative Review Process lost favor and was replaced by the Educational Performance Recognition Program. Significant gains occurred in student

enrollments in mathematics, science, and foreign language. Virginia students scored above the national average in reading, mathematics, language, science, and social studies and also scored higher than students in other Southeastern states in math and American history.

The Virginia Department of Education came under close scrutiny by the Baliles administration. The Price Waterhouse study of the department and the state board charted a new course for the 1990s. However, the dominant theme of the Baliles administration in relation to the board of education, superintendent of public instruction, and department of education was one of control. A shift of power from the state board, state superintendent, and state department to the office of the secretary of education occurred in financial, budgetary, and accountability matters. Dr. Davis continued to emphasize educational programming and lead DOE staff in carrying out the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education.

Chapter 6

THE RETIREMENT YEARS

The Retirement Announcement

On Thursday, May 24, 1989, Dr. S. John Davis told the board of education that he would relinquish the state superintendency on January 13, 1990.¹ Timing his retirement with the end of Gerald L. Baliles' term as governor, Davis set the stage for the governor to be elected in November 1989 to appoint his successor to serve coterminously with the new administration.

Dr. Davis had been considering his retirement for several months before the announcement. Jan Davis had wanted her husband to quit when Governor Baliles did not immediately reappoint him. Although Baliles' delay forced Davis, his family, and supporters to wait through a lengthy period of disquietude filled with rumors and uncertainties, Davis accepted reappointment and served the governor for four years. However, the beginning of the campaign for the nomination and election of a new governor served as the catalyst for Davis' announcement that he would retire after ten years and six and one-half months as superintendent of public instruction.

¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1989," 60, 25 May 1989.

The remainder of 1989 was spent by Davis concentrating on key programs. The implementation of the Family Life Education (FLE) Program and the development of the Educational Performance Recognition (EPR) Program were his chief considerations. Davis also spent time receiving accolades for his service to the Commonwealth.

Ten days before Davis' planned retirement, Governor-elect L. Douglas Wilder still had not named a successor. The political rumor mills concentrated on the names of four potential replacements for Davis: Secretary of Education Donald J. Finley; Dr. William C. Bosher, Jr., division superintendent of Henrico County; and two deputy state superintendents, Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., and Dr. Vincent C. Cibbarelli.² The education establishment anxiously awaited the announcement of the appointment of a new state superintendent as Davis spent his last days in office.

The Interim State Superintendent

As the January 13, 1990, inauguration date for Governor L. Douglas Wilder approached, S. John Davis prepared for retirement. Davis' immediate plans were for some rest and relaxation with his wife Jan. A trip to Great Britain was booked for March 1990; and after the Davises returned to

²Paul Bradley, "Chief Is Leaving A Big Mark on Virginia Schools," Richmond News Leader, 3 January 1990, 15.

their Midlothian, Virginia, home and settled in, Jack had plans for a new career. The idea for Dr. Davis and a few colleagues to form an educational consulting firm had been in the planning since Jack announced his retirement. Details for the new consulting firm's organization were set by early January 1990.

However, retirement was not to come as quickly as Davis had planned. Secretary of Education Appointee James W. Dyke, Jr., talked to Dr. Davis about staying on as interim state superintendent. Dyke indicated that the administration was having some difficulty in deciding on a successor to Davis. He did not give a timeline for the new appointment, but Dr. Davis agreed to stay even though the trip to Europe had been scheduled and his consulting firm had its first contractual obligation in late May at Rutgers University in New Jersey.³ Therefore, S. John Davis remained in the twenty-fifth floor office of the James Monroe Building occupied by Virginia's Superintendent of Public Instruction until May 1990.

Disparity

As S. John Davis prepared to leave office and as the new administration prepared to take over, the chief issue

³S. John Davis, telephone conversation with author, 26 February 1995.

before the leadership of the state was educational disparity. In an interview Davis was quoted, "Disparity's an area we've made some progress in, but not enough. I strongly believe that a person's place of birth or where they live should not determine the quality of their lives."⁴

At the January 12, 1990, meeting of the Virginia Board of Education a "Resolution Concerning the Reduction of Disparity in Virginia" was introduced. The resolution stated that the 1984 Report of the Governor's Commission on Virginia's Future and the 1986 Report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education acknowledged that disparity exists in Virginia; that Article VIII, Section 1 of the Constitution of Virginia calls for a system of free public elementary and secondary schools to ensure education of high quality; and that the constitution of Virginia requires the board of education to promote the prescribed Standards of Quality and to review periodically "the adequacy of the existing school divisions." Therefore, the board of education had an obligation to "define disparity in its several forms," to take action to determine if disparity was adversely affecting students and schools, and to develop

⁴Bradley, "Chief Is Leaving A Big Mark on Virginia Schools," 15.

alternatives for the reduction of disparity.⁵

In his inaugural speech on January 13, 1990, Governor L. Douglas Wilder announced that he would form a commission to address the problem of disparity in public education in the Commonwealth.⁶ Governor Wilder then signed Executive Order No. 4 creating the Commission on Educational Opportunity for All Virginians and gave it the following charge:

advising the Governor and the General Assembly on how the Commonwealth could further address and overcome differences in educational programs in Virginia's public schools identified...as an obstacle to Virginia's becoming one of the nation's top states in the overall quality of education it offers.⁷

The commission was given a more narrowly defined task than was the Commission on Excellence in Education, and members sought to address issues with documented ties to disparity among local school divisions. The twenty-one member commission was chaired by Board of Education President Willard L. Lemmon, and the vice-chair was former delegate Dorothy S. McDiarmid. It included representatives

⁵Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1990," 61, 12 January 1990, 10.

⁶L. Douglas Wilder, Governor of Virginia, "Inaugural Address to the People of the Commonwealth of Virginia," 13 January 1990.

⁷L. Douglas Wilder, Governor of Virginia, Executive Order Number Four, 24 January 1990.

of the General Assembly, the board of education, school boards, teachers, parents, superintendents, colleges and universities, and business and civic groups. There were three ex-officio members--the secretaries of education and finance and the superintendent of public instruction (interim)--on the commission. Each member was assigned to one of three working committees for program equity, pupil equity, and fiscal equity. The commission began meeting in April 1990 while S. John Davis was serving as interim superintendent of public instruction.⁸

EPR Continues

As might be expected with an interim state superintendent in office awaiting a governor's appointment of a successor, the only major initiative begun was the work of the disparity commission which the governor had authorized. Otherwise, only ongoing projects continued. EPR program development did proceed as Dr. Gary T. Henry and his VCU team worked with DOE staff. One of Dr. Davis' last memos as interim state superintendent was sent to division superintendents requesting the completion of a data collection form by each school division. Also included in

⁸Final Report, Governor's Commission on Educational Opportunity for All Virginians, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 26 August 1991, 2.

the memo was "a complete list of the seven EPR objectives, indicators that fell under each objective, the description of the numerator and the denominator required to calculate the indicator percent."⁹ EPR was so far along in development that Dr. Spagnolo's third official day in office saw him sending a memo to division superintendents requesting completion of a "school cluster questionnaire for each of your schools."¹⁰

Dr. Davis Finally Retires

Dr. Davis' most significant contribution during his service as interim superintendent of public instruction was as the coordinator of DOE staff preparation for the work of the disparity commission. Davis also worked with the commission in its first meetings. However, Secretary of Education Dyke, a former state board member and Governor Wilder's point-man for education, took a very active role in the work of the commission, and Dr. Davis began to feel unnecessary. On March 12, 1990, Jack and Jan Davis flew to London, England, for their long-awaited trip to Great Britain, and in a sense S. John Davis flew into his actual

⁹S. John Davis, "Administrative Supts. Memo, No. 55," 25 April 1990.

¹⁰Joseph A Spagnolo, Jr. "Administrative Supts. Memo, No. 90," 3 July 1990.

retirement from the rigors of the state superintendency.

Although he did return to Richmond in April and did not officially sever his ties with the Wilder administration until May of 1990, he was no longer in command of the department. Dr. E. B. Howerton, Jr., was the DOE staff person in charge at the March and May state board meetings. No title of acting superintendent of public instruction was conferred on Dr. Howerton, and he was not listed as such in the official board minutes. However, he was thanked by the state board for having acted in that capacity in the department and with the board of education from March until June. On June 28, 1990, Secretary Dyke appeared before the state board and introduced Joseph A. Spagnolo, Jr., Lynchburg City's division superintendent, as Virginia's new superintendent of public instruction.¹¹ S. John Davis' years of service as state superintendent were now history.

The Virginia Beach Superintendency

The remainder of 1990 was a time of travel and educational consulting for Jack Davis. He and Jan flew to Europe in November 1990 and visited Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. While in Zurich, Switzerland, Dr. Davis addressed an educational conference at the invitation of

¹¹Board of Education, Commonwealth of Virginia, "Minutes, 1990," 61, 28 June 1990, 39.

William J. Burkeholder, his former colleague in Fairfax County and in the department of education.

Upon Davis' return home he received a call from the Virginia Beach School Board in December 1990 asking him if he would be interested in serving as acting division superintendent for approximately six months while a national search for a new superintendent was being conducted. Dr. Davis accepted the challenge, and he and Jan moved to Virginia Beach temporarily to administer the Virginia Beach Public Schools.¹²

The situation in Virginia Beach was not good. The City's schools had been "in turmoil for some months over controversial curriculum changes and their even more controversial implementation." This and other problems within the school administration had eroded teacher confidence in Superintendent E. Carlton Bowyer and led to his firing by the school board.¹³

Dr. Davis was asked by the Virginia Beach School Board to "appease thousands of teachers upset over rapid classroom reforms, restore faith in the school system, and cut \$15

¹²Davis, telephone conversation, 26 February 1995.

¹³Editorial, "Right Man at the Top," The Virginian Pilot, 13 December 1990, 4.

million from next year's [1991-92] budget."¹⁴ According to Virginia Beach news sources:

Davis "tried to do it all." Soon after his arrival in Virginia Beach, he recommended drastic personnel cuts: eliminating seventy-four jobs--a third of the central office staff. Some staff members disagree with his decisions and deeply resent how individual careers have suffered. Yet others, including school board members, praise his fairness and his tact. Davis wooed parents by asking for their opinions and appointing them to committees. Leaders of an activists' group called Parents for Quality Education, among the biggest critics of the old administration, give Davis high praise.¹⁵

Dr. Davis slowed down controversial classroom reforms to help teachers. He surprised his own staff member, Assistant Superintendent Shirley Cassida, by proposing nominal raises after Cassida had told teacher representatives that raises would be impossible for 1991-92. Davis earned high praise from board members and from many central office staffers. Budget Director Mordecai Smith said that Davis helped him get through one of the toughest budget years he had had. "Davis," said Smith, "really listens to staff members. His door is open to janitors and deputy superintendents alike."¹⁶

¹⁴Lise Olsen, "Cutting Consensus: It Has To Be Done," The Virginia Beach Beacon, 10 February 1991, 10.

¹⁵Lise Olsen, "Ideal Superintendent," The Virginia Beach Beacon, 14/15 February 1991, 10.

¹⁶Ibid.

When the Virginia Beach School Board hired a new superintendent to take office July 1, 1991, the Davises returned home to Richmond. Dr. Davis continued his educational consulting work. However, the Virginia Beach experience gave him a new service to offer local school boards: Davis now was willing to be a "superintendent-for-hire" or a "rent-a-superintendent." The idea was to help other leaderless school systems through difficult transitions¹⁷--and at \$11,000 a month which he earned in Virginia Beach¹⁸--the pay was not bad!

Political Advisor

In Virginia's 1994 gubernatorial election S. John Davis worked for Democrat Mary Sue Terry, who was aspiring to become Virginia's first woman governor. Dr. Davis became one of Ms. Terry's chief educational advisors and helped write her educational proposals for the campaign. Chief among Davis' contributions to the Terry camp was a proposal to help resolve disparity by reducing the pupil-teacher ratio in primary classrooms, kindergarten through grade three. Davis also advocated, and candidate Terry campaigned for, strengthening vocational education and having educators

¹⁷Davis, telephone conversation, 26 February 1995.

¹⁸Olsen, 11.

work more closely with the business/industrial community.¹⁹

Although Ms. Terry lost decisively to Republican George Allen in the November election, part of her educational program was adopted by key members of the Democratic leadership that controlled the General Assembly in the 1994 session. Ironically, Mary Sue Terry's initiative on disparity, the K-3 teacher-pupil ratio reduction to 20 to 1, was approved and funded by the General Assembly in 1994.

Dr. Davis also actively campaigned with the new governor for the appointment of Dr. William C. Bosher, division superintendent in Henrico County, as the new superintendent of public instruction. When Davis retired, he had told Secretary Dyke that three division superintendents should be considered to succeed him: Dr. Bosher; Dr. Fred Bateman, division superintendent in Chesapeake; and Dr. Jim Graham, division superintendent in Wise County. He did not suggest or recommend Dr. Joseph A. Spagnolo, Jr., the eventual appointee. In 1994 Davis believed that Bosher was the best choice considering the political climate at that time. Dr. Davis thought that Bosher's outgoing personality and conservative nature appeared to fit the times best, and he wrote the governor-elect and called Allen staff members and other influential Virginians in support of

¹⁹Davis, telephone conversation, 26 February 1995.

Bosher.

With Dr. Bosher's appointment Davis worked quietly behind the scenes to advise his long-time friend if and when he wanted advice. He also has from time to time met with Superintendent Bosher, had lunch with him, and commiserated with him over the trials and tribulations inherent in the state superintendency.²⁰

When Dr. Bosher was appointed superintendent of public instruction, he resigned his Henrico County superintendency. S. John Davis was hired by the Henrico County School Board to work as a consultant with Acting Superintendent Kenneth Crush. Crush had been director of finance in Henrico County and was not eligible to be appointed division superintendent. The Henrico County School Board hired Dr. Davis to help Mr. Crush administer the system until they could hire a replacement for Dr. Bosher.

Following a several month stint in the Henrico County School Board Office, Dr. Davis returned to retirement and his educational consultant's role. Continuing to maintain a strong interest in education, Dr. Davis worked for the Virginia Association of Elementary Principals during the 1995 General Assembly. Davis also has advised the coalition of school systems working to solve the disparity problem in

²⁰Davis, telephone conversation, 26 February 1995.

Virginia. During the 1995 legislative session Davis discussed disparity with Kenneth Walker, division superintendent in Halifax County and chairman of the coalition, and volunteered to help him and the coalition (at no fee) to develop funding proposals to solve disparity.²¹

Although Jack Davis has retired from the state superintendency, he still has not retreated from his involvement in public education. Active and interested, he is concerned about children and how to educate them for the twenty-first century.²² Enjoying his grandchildren is not enough to keep Jack Davis totally occupied.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

Chapter 7

DESCRIBING A STATE SUPERINTENDENT

In 1990 S. John Davis retired after having served more than ten years as superintendent of public instruction in Virginia. When his impending retirement was announced, newspaper accounts gave Davis' work as the state's top school officer positive reviews. Reports summarized Davis' career using broad strokes to describe Davis' role in increasing funding for education, improving achievement test scores to above national averages, making major improvements in educational standards and programs, assisting in the growth of magnet schools in the sciences and arts, and implementing improvements in handicapped and vocational education.¹

Other reporters generalized that Davis, who served under three governors, had seen rapid and sometimes controversial changes in the million-student state system. Many of the changes Davis oversaw grew out of the 1986 report of the Commission on Excellence in Education. Davis was given credit for helping implement the report of the Commission on Excellence. He supervised an overhaul of teacher education programs at state colleges and the

¹"State Superintendent Announces Retirement," Petersburg, Virginia Progress Index, 1 June 1989, B-5.

development of pre-kindergarten classes for four-year olds, and he advocated sixth grade literacy testing. The most controversial program he implemented was the statewide Family Life Education Program.²

In one editorial the state's largest newspaper, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, summarized that Dr. Davis had supervised "the building of solid foundations" on which the next administration could build. In particular, the Times-Dispatch's editor considered Davis a "national leader in the movement to abolish the professional education degree in favor of a sensible requirement that all aspiring teachers major in the liberal arts and sciences." Davis also was praised for the state's decision "to put more rigor into the requirements in our schools, to make the content of courses more challenging." However, the editorial concluded, "much yet remains to be done."³

In January 1990 as Davis prepared to leave office the tenor of the newspaper stories remained the same as they had been six months before. Davis was considered an effective leader, one who maintained open communication channels and one who led Virginia through rapid and sometimes

²Paul Bradley, "State Superintendent to Retire after Decade of School Change," Richmond News Leader, 25 May 1989, 1.

³Editorial, "Jack Davis' Good Work," Richmond Times-Dispatch, 12 June 1989, A-8.

controversial educational change.⁴

Newspaper accounts offered a somewhat superficial level of analysis of Davis' accomplishments as state superintendent. The lack of incisive analysis is not uncommon in the press. Newspaper reporters seldom provide detailed answers to issues such as the elements of a state superintendent's success or failure. In fact, writers in the popular press and writers in academia have devoted little attention to the work of state superintendents.

Recent research on Virginia's superintendents of public instruction reveals two approaches in analyzing their work. The first is seen in a doctoral dissertation at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1975. Emmett G. Shufflebarger analyzed the career of Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson, who served as Virginia's state superintendent from 1960 to 1974. Shufflebarger presented biographical data on Dr. Wilkerson and described the statutory responsibilities of the superintendent of public instruction. His thesis was that Dr. Wilkerson was instrumental in developing Virginia's Standards of Quality and that action was his chief accomplishment as state

⁴Paul Bradley, "Chief Is Leaving a Big Mark on Virginia Schools," Richmond News Leader, 3 January 1990, 15.

superintendent.⁵ The study was restricted to a highly focused, limited analysis of a state superintendent's work.

A second doctoral dissertation completed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1990 also analyzed the work of a superintendent of public instruction. Maynard K. Bean studied the factors that affected the 1986 report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education. Superintendent S. John Davis was identified as the most influential actor in shaping the recommendations made by the commission.⁶ However, this study was not designed to describe a state superintendent's role except as it related to one important educational report.

The general pattern in popular and academic literature has been to overlook the factors that define the role of a state superintendent and the impact that officer has on the administration in which he works and on public education in the state. This neglect highlights the need for a model to help in understanding the behaviors and actions of the superintendent. Such a device is also needed to help interpret the role of the superintendent in public education

⁵Emmett G. Shufflebarger, Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson: His Life and Work as State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1960-1974 (Ed. D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1975).

⁶Maynard K. Bean, Factors That Affected the 1986 Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education (Ed. D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1990).

in a state.

A model for studying state superintendents can help interested parties understand why different state superintendents take different types of actions. Such an archetype enables scholars to gain a greater understanding about the forces at work that shaped actions taken by the state superintendent. It can help educators and politicians learn from history and provide a framework by which to project future courses of action.

A Typology

The concept of a typology is often used in political science and biology and appears to be most helpful in this study. Typologies are used to reduce masses of complex material into an understandable and effective pattern. They can help to organize many diverse themes and influences into a more readily understood unit.

The political scientist James David Barber defines the concept as follows:

A typology includes all the subjects but does not assume they are all alike. It allows for variation without lapsing into needless complexity. It sensitizes the researcher to the possibility that leaders in roughly the same role may display a few, major, different

patterns of cognition, motivation, and behavior.⁷

Several typologies pertaining to executives already exist. The most famous is Barber's typology of presidential character, which earned fame in the early 1970s for predicting President Richard M. Nixon's premature exit from office.⁸ Typologies have also been used in state governmental research. Martha W. Weinberg's typology of governors in Massachusetts focused on agency results produced by different levels of gubernatorial control.⁹ Steven D. Johnson developed a typology of the administration of Governor Charles S. Robb of Virginia that used resources available to the governor and the set of assumptions about the operation of government that the governor used.¹⁰ These typologies extended from the descriptive to the predictive, but they all explained the behavior of leaders by integrating research material into an identifiable

⁷James Davis Barber, "Strategies for Understanding Politicians," American Journal of Political Science, 18 (May 1974), 455.

⁸James Davis Barber, The Presidential Character, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1985), 364-388.

⁹Martha W. Weinberg, Managing the State (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977), 208-209.

¹⁰Steven D. Johnson, Charles S. Robb and the Reserved Governorship, I (Ph. D. diss., University of Virginia, 1990), 16-37.

pattern."¹¹

This case study of S. John Davis suggests an identifiable pattern for the research data that was collected. Three key variables were identified as describing the work of a state superintendent. These variables include the developmental influences that shaped the superintendent's thinking and philosophy, the limits that are placed upon the superintendent by external forces, and the career themes that define the central elements of a superintendent's work. The model created in this description of the state superintendnecy of Dr. Davis includes these three critical components and uses them to produce a typology for the study of state superintendents and their impact upon public education during their tenure in office.

The first variable in the typology includes the developmental influences that define the persona of the superintendent. These influences include the family background, the educational experiences, the professional associates, the work and the non-work experiences, and the historical context that have been significant in the superintendent's life. This variable was obvious at the beginning of the study, and chapter one begins detailing the

¹¹Ibid., 18.

influences that shaped S. John Davis.

The second variable was not as obvious, and the author did not grasp its significance until late in the course of the study when it became apparent that certain factors external to the state superintendent have the potential to control and limit actions. These factors include the institutional environs that come with the office of state superintendent. A superintendent of public instruction has certain powers, duties, and responsibilities; however, the powers, duties, and responsibilities held by other governmental offices and agencies greatly influence the course of the superintendent's work. The institutional limits that are identified in this context include the governor, the secretary of education, the state board of education, the state legislature, the state department of education, local school superintendents, and local school boards. Outside of government, but potentially very potent as a limiting factor, are the various interest groups who are stakeholders in the educational process. Teachers' organizations, school boards' associations, and parent-teacher groups are included in this grouping. The final confining element for the state superintendent is the state's constitution and code which delineate duties, powers, and responsibilities.

The third variable was detected early in the first

stage of the study. A preliminary analysis of Dr. Davis' professional career using material discerned in initial interviews and readings led to the identification of five important factors that kept reoccurring and evolving in Dr. Davis' work. These factors were so strong that they became recognizable as themes that defined the subject and characterized his professional career.

These five career themes were analyzed in each of the four major periods of leadership in Dr. Davis' career. The first theme was that of politics and included everything related to the political workings of an educational leader. After some debate, personality was included in the political analysis because a state superintendent's personality determines to a great extent the success or failure of the political role. The other themes that were identified are all significant elements in public education leadership. Educational financing, educational programming, public accountability, and organizational management were dominant themes during Dr. Davis' work as division superintendent in Fairfax County and during his service as state superintendent in the administrations of three governors-- John N. Dalton, Charles S. Robb, and Gerald L. Baliles.

The model that follows is a typology derived from the case study of S. John Davis:

Developmental Influences	Institutional Limits	Career Themes
Family	Governor/Secretary of Education	Politics
Education	Board of Education/ State Legislature	Funding
Professional Associates	Department of Education	Instructional Initiatives
Life/Work Experiences	School Divisions/ Educational Groups	Accountability
History	Constitution/Code	Organizational Management

The variables in this model are interdependent. They also are expansive or restrictive depending on the characteristics of the state superintendent being described and the forces external to the state superintendent. Both developmental influences and career themes are described on a continuum ranging from strong to weak. Institutional limits stretch from expansive to restrictive. Career themes provide the central description of the state superintendents' career while in office and are characterized as evolving and reoccurring. Developmental influences and institutional limits impact the emergence, the progression, and the final description of the career themes.

Describing S. John Davis

The following description of S. John Davis as the sixteenth superintendent of public instruction in Virginia, 1979-1990, is based on the typology developed for the portrayal of a state superintendent. The three primary variables identified are used to aid in the interpretation of Dr. Davis' state superintendency. The conclusions are drawn from the five career themes of his work that have provided the central descriptors for the main chapters in this study.

Developmental Influences

Family: Family background and influences can contribute to the development of an individual in an active, positive way as they did in Jack Davis' growth from boyhood to manhood. Sound roots can be found in the Davises of western Pennsylvania.

The lack of formal education on the part of Davis' parents became, as it did for many other American families, a rallying cry for their children's future. A college education was a way to improve life possibilities for young Jack Davis. Strong values from the home stayed with Jack all of his life. From his father Davis learned tolerance, the use of friendliness in treating those with whom one worked, and an example of treating union workers with

respect and fairness.

Davis' Uncle John, the Pennsylvania educator, was perhaps the greatest contributor to S. John Davis' development as an educator in his own right. The first Dr. John Davis became a role model for Jack, and he carved out his own life as a professional educator reproducing Uncle John's career in Virginia.

Finally, Jack Davis' career had the influence of a supportive family which allowed him the luxury of working long hours without having to worry about problems on the homefront. Jan Davis, trained as a teacher herself, knew and understood Jack's work, and she was able to discuss issues, understand the perplexities, offer advice, and give encouragement as needed.

Education: Jack Davis' interest in science in high school led him to enter a pre-med program in college before he switched career paths and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree. Teaching junior high school science more clearly defined his thought processes and led him to school administration. Graduate school courses in educational administration emphasized instructional objectives, systems approaches, Bloom's taxonomy, and Bruner's psychological insight into children's learning. In his dissertation Davis analyzed programmed budgeting systems in fifteen large school systems and developed the prototype for such a system

in Fairfax County Public Schools.

Davis' graduate work in educational administration was well grounded in the scientific management influences of Taylor and Weber; the human relations work of Mayo, Lewin, and Rogers; and the work of revisionists like Bennis, Barnard, and McGregor, who attempted to reconcile and integrate classical and modern organizational theory.¹² Davis believed that he modeled his organizational theory and management practice on the work of Bennis, Barnard, and McGregor. He worked at humanizing large, impersonal bureaucracies--the public school systems of Fairfax County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. He emphasized teachers working self-directed within a framework of managerial goals which were developed in a consultative manner. The Virginia Standards of Learning Program is a good example of this consultative developmental approach to managerial goals which all employees were expected to follow. Davis also saw himself as a Theory Y manager, one who was preoccupied with the nature of relationships, and created an environment encouraging commitment to organizational objectives. However, exemplifying Theory X leaders who used tactics of control, procedures for telling people what to do, and

¹²Warren C. Bennis, Changing Organizations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 66-67.

techniques to determine whether they were doing it,¹³ Davis developed in both Fairfax County and Richmond accountability models that Taylor or Weber could have conceived. Davis also used elements of classical scientific management. For example, Davis' use of achievement test data was reminiscent of Taylor's belief that managers should use hard data to avoid subjective decision making.¹⁴

Professional Associates: S. John Davis' professional associates influenced his development from the early years of his classroom teaching career to his tenure as head of public education in Virginia. Fortunately for Davis, his first principal and assistant principal recognized ability and promise in the young science teacher and both encouraged and groomed him for administration. Again, his first assistant principalship placed him with a principal from whom he could learn and grow professionally. Organization, discipline, and communication were attributes of early mentors like James Tyler and Doris Matthews, and he inculcated their practices and philosophies into his own.

As a principal and area superintendent in Fairfax County Davis learned from two superintendents. The first, Earl Funderburke, influenced Davis to concentrate on

¹³Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), 132.

¹⁴Bennis, 66-67.

the education of children before peripherals like buildings. The second, Larry Watts, taught Davis the importance of communicating effectively and stressing the human factor in personnel decisions. Davis worked hard in Fairfax and in Richmond to build staff relations. Ironically, his last years as state superintendent saw him criticized by some staff members and plagued by poor staff morale at times.

Several colleagues were major influences on Davis. Myron E. (Mike) Cale, Davis' chief financial officer in Fairfax County, later held the same role for Davis in Richmond. Also influential were E. B. Howerton, Jr. in the legislative arena and Callie P. Shingleton in instruction. Dr. Howerton was also influential in handling personnel within the department. Unfortunately, some DOE staff had a lack of confidence in Howerton's reliability, some did not work well with Shingleton's personality, and some did not like Cale's fast talk and brusque manner. Harry Smith, the specialist in the department in media relations, was also influential, for Dr. Davis liked to "run things by" Mr. Smith.¹⁵

Davis also was influenced by several key members of the General Assembly. Senators Ed Willey and Hunter Andrews and

¹⁵Harry L. Smith, interview, 4 February 1994.

Speaker A. L. Philpott liked Jack Davis, and they taught him the intricacies of the Richmond political scene. Davis in turn learned how the political process really works, and he used such knowledge to implement programs and to survive.

Life/Work Experiences: A description of S. John Davis' career must include the life and work experiences that molded the shape of his later emphasis in education. The first was his work at a summer camp for handicapped children. He always had a strong sympathy for special education, even stating at one time that he would like to be a special education teacher. His budgets and his programs for handicapped children made Fairfax County and later Virginia a leader in the education for handicapped children. In fact, Virginia's requirements and regulations that governed special education programming exceeded federal law by the end of the Davis era, and advocacy of parental involvement in the education of their handicapped children made Virginia a leader in that area. Davis' successor as state superintendent attempted to scale back some of Davis' work in this area and ran into such a storm of protest from parents and special education advocates that he and the Virginia Board of Education quickly retreated on their proposed modification of special education regulations.

The primary elements about Davis' work that can be gleaned from his life and work experiences come from a

comparison of his Fairfax superintendency to his state superintendency. The similarities between Davis' work as division superintendent in Fairfax County and the legacy of his state superintendency are numerous. It is clear from this model that a state superintendent's past behavior can be a good predictor of future behavior. A governor ready to make such an appointment would do well to review carefully the previous track record. Table 15 depicts the Fairfax and Richmond record and compares the similarities between the two.

History: Influences on S. John Davis' leadership in public education include the historical trends that impacted public education during his career. All people are to some extent products of the times in which they live, and educators tend to be products of the educational times in which they live. A multiplicity of factors intertwine to form this history, and in Dr. Davis' case the history led to numerous educational initiatives.

F. Freeman Butts categorized American education after World War II as having four major purposes: greater emphasis upon academic studies and intellectual discipline, greater attention to the development of individual talents, greater vocational competence in technological and scientific skills, and greater social efficiency in the demand for accountability and competency-based teacher

Table 15

A Comparison of the Similarities Between Davis' Record in Fairfax County and in Richmond

Career Themes	Fairfax County	Commonwealth of Virginia
Political Resources	Good relations with School Board, Board of Supervisors, and the Fairfax Education Association Reappointed by two different boards	Good relations with Board of Education, General Assembly, and the Virginia Education Association Reappointed by two different governors
Economic Resources	PPBS system-wide Budget growth Teachers' salaries improved	PPBS in the Department of Education Budget growth Teachers' salaries improved
Instructional Initiatives	Program of Studies MBO Criterion testing Special Education--growth in budget and programs Vocational Education Hands-on programs in building houses Programs for academically unsuccessful students	Standards of Learning MBO Criterion testing (advocated, not implemented) Special Education--growth in budget, programs, and regulations Vocational Education Competency based programs and business-industry-educational partnerships Programs for remediation

Table 15 (Continued)

	Increase graduation requirements in social studies above state requirements	Raise state graduation requirements
	Innovations: Team teaching, open space education, error-free writing	Innovations: Magnet schools, electronic classroom, model schools
Accountability	Program Audit of Administration and Instruction Emphasis on test score improvement	Administrative Review Process Emphasis on test score improvement
Organizational Management	Open, dialogue, consultative Forges compromise Stress on communications Strong on implementation Media--good relations Criticism from teachers over raises	Open, dialogue, consultative Forges compromise in SOL, FLE Publications Implementation of programs Public relations for education in state Criticism from DOE staff, the Executive Branch, and local school divisions

education.¹⁶ Dr. Davis' career reflected these four purposes: greater emphasis upon academic studies and intellectual discipline is seen in the response to the reform reports of the 1980s; greater attention to the development of individual talents is seen in Davis' attention to the education of the gifted and the handicapped; greater vocational competence is seen in Davis' emphasis on competency-based vocational education and technology in all its forms; and the call for social efficiency is reflected in Davis' accountability models as he promoted MBO and PPBS and in his efforts to change teacher education requirements.

As much as anything, Jack Davis was a product of the changes that took place in education in the nation's suburbs as upper and middle-class suburbanites sought schools that would push students to their potential, prepare them for college, and protect them from much of the economic and social insecurity of the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁷ Davis' Fairfax County experience reflected, and his later state approach attempted to duplicate, increased financing for public

¹⁶R. Freeman Butts, Public Education in the United States: from Revolution to Reform (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), 26.

¹⁷Robert L. Church and Michael W. Sedlak, Education in the United States: An Interpretive History (New York: The Free Press, 1976), 417-427.

schools, the adoption of new and more expensive curricula, and paying higher salaries to attract and keep the best teachers.

Working in the Washington, DC, suburbs also influenced Davis' enlistment as a foot soldier in the accountability movement. The federal government led the way in the trappings of accountability: management by objectives, programmed budgeting, systems analysis, program audits, and computerization.¹⁸ Jack Davis' academic proclivity for science systems was fueled by his graduate work in school administration, and working in the shadow of the federal government finalized the commitment to accountability.

The final historical trend that played a major role in shaping Jack Davis' work was the movement to reform education that grew out of A Nation At Risk, issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The report sparked much publicity, national debate, astonishing public demand for copies of the document, and wide-spread activities in every state in response.¹⁹ In Virginia the administration of Governor Gerald L. Baliles answered with

¹⁸Leslie H. Browder, Jr., An Administrator's Handbook on Educational Accountability (Arlington, Virginia: American Association of School Administrators, 1973), 10.

¹⁹Milton Goldberg and James Harvey, "A Nation at Risk: The Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education," Phi Delta Kappan 64 (September 1983), 14.

the report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education, and S. John Davis' final four years in office were shaped by the implementation of the thirty-six recommendations from that report.

Institutional Limits

Governor/Secretary of Education: Institutional limits can be placed upon a state superintendent by the executive branch of government. Such bounds are determined by four factors: (1) the governor's philosophy of state government which can be described as ranging from expansive to restrictive, (2) the financial resources available to the governor and the governor's priorities in funding education with those resources, (3) the governor's vision for education and campaign promises made on educational issues, and (4) the governor's level of acceptance or rejection of the superintendent's ideas and programs.

In examining boundaries placed upon S. John Davis it is necessary to review the three administrations in which he served. Governor John N. Dalton was a conservative with a restricted strategic view of state government.²⁰ The economy during his term was sluggish and burdened with high inflation rates. The governor's vision of education was

²⁰Johnson, Charles S. Robb and the Reserved Governorship, 34.

somewhat traditional with a primary emphasis on quality, basics, and academic standards. Governor Dalton was supportive of S. John Davis' ideas and programs.

In the two and one-half years that Dr. Davis served Governor Dalton the traditional division of duties between the secretary of education and the state superintendent continued. Secretary Gilley paid primary attention to higher education, and Dr. Davis concentrated on K-12 education. Dr. Davis, the state board, and the department were rarely instructed to perform specific assignments in programming. The chief oversight of education was in the budgetary process. Education had to compete with other state agencies and programs for dollars to spend, and the net result was that education's share of the total state budget decreased during the Dalton administration. However, the governor and secretary did not demand as much control over the state's educational bureaucracy as did later administrations, and Davis' development of important initiatives such as the Standards of Learning Program took place at the departmental level. Davis summed up Dalton's approach by saying that the governor "assigned responsibility and authority and then was there if needed."²¹

²¹Davis, interview, 3 May 1992.

In the administration of Governor Charles S. Robb certain differences can be detected. While Robb was cautious and deliberate, he represented a break with the immediate past of Virginia governors. Robb worked with a selective agenda: education and economic development were his top priorities. Governor Robb actively worked on educational and economic development issues and programs. Although Governor Robb and Chief of Staff David K. McCloud were demanding of state bureaucracy in general, Secretary of Education Casteen and Superintendent Davis had a different relationship because of Robb's intense interest in and involvement with education. Robb's educational policies created an image of Virginia as a national innovator in public education and raised education to the level of a litmus test which was positively valued by the administration. Although the economy was slow with a national recession in 1982 facing Robb in his first year in office, Robb's education budgets outraced the rate of inflation for all four years, and his largest budget was the 1986-88 budget submitted just days before he left office.

Although Secretary Casteen and Superintendent Davis defined their respective duties such that Davis had primary responsibility for K-12 education, Dr. Casteen was more actively involved in the K-12 sector than Dr. Gilley had been. Governor Robb also worked directly with Davis,

Casteen, and the department in numerous projects. Dr. Casteen described the process, "Some basic ideas started with us; some ideas with Jack and the department. Jack was excellent at putting ideas in place."²²

Governor Baliles was a more active governor than was Governor Robb, and he had a more positive outlook on government than did his predecessor. However, Robb and Baliles both sought greater control over the permanent government than had Dalton. They also entered office determined to make the bureaucracy work in their favor. When it came to the management of public education Baliles and Robb had different views and took very different actions. While both may have viewed the bureaucracy in Richmond as somewhat incompetent, Baliles was unimpressed with the department of education. Therefore, Baliles and Secretary of Education Finley placed significant boundaries on Davis, the state board, and the department.

Baliles also came to office committed to several campaign promises. It was clear that improving teachers' salaries, funding fully the Standards of Quality, implementing a statewide elementary guidance program, and stopping merit pay plans would dominate. Therefore, it was natural in the eyes of the governor and secretary that the

²²Casteen, telephone conversation, 14 March 1995.

role of the state superintendent, the state board, and the department would be limited in areas of finance, budgeting, and specified programming. Dr. Finley was chosen secretary of education because his strengths matched Governor Baliles' needs. Dr. Finley described the Baliles administration's approach by stating, "It was my role to play the 'inside game' in Richmond, to try to pull off a very detailed agenda for Governor Baliles.... Jack Davis was 'up to speed' on information and implementation, ...yet things were not getting done well in the department."²³ Although Governor Baliles said that there was no conscious shift of power from the board of education, superintendent of public instruction, and department of education to the administration, in reality, greater institutional limits were placed on the state superintendent by the governor and secretary than ever before.

Board of Education/State Legislature: The bounds placed on a state superintendent by the board of education and the state legislature tend to be of two types: formal and informal. The formal limits came through specific votes taken on various issues, programs, and budgets. The informal limits are established by the day-to-day working relationship that is set by the superintendent as he deals

²³Finley, interview, 28 April 1994.

with the individual members of both bodies. Boundaries can be restrictive or expansive depending on the circumstances and specifics of situations and initiatives.

In general, S. John Davis enjoyed good formal and informal relationships with the Virginia Board of Education. During the Dalton administration the board refused to approve his teacher certification proposals by a 5-to-4 vote. However, Governor Robb replaced one dissenting board member, and Davis received good support from the Robb and Baliles' boards. During the Baliles years at least one board member may have worked behind the scenes to diminish Davis' stature with the governor. Davis' major proposals--the Standards of Learning Program, the Administrative Review Process, and the Family Life Education Program, for example--received strong board support. Davis and the state board worked closely on budgetary matters throughout his years in office. On an informal basis Davis worked well with the state board and did not appear to be restricted except in one area. During his last years in office behind the scenes pressure from state board members concerning appointments to DOE staff positions became more frequent.

The Virginia General Assembly was generally not too restrictive on Davis during his superintendency. During the first half of his administration board budgets were usually reduced by the legislature. Later, certain programs were

mandated. The most important one of these was Family Life Education. The General Assembly did attempt to restrict Dr. Davis on the implementation of the Standards of Learning Program by refusing to fund his original request. However, Davis and the state board reordered priorities in the DOE budget and funded the developmental process. Informally Davis and leaders of the General Assembly worked well together. Davis helped men like Senator Willey and Senator Andrews "find" more money for programs they favored; he provided them with information; and in turn they helped him. The most obvious example of legislative support came when leaders in the General Assembly successfully lobbied Governor Baliles for Davis' reappointment in 1986.

Department of Education: The limits placed on a state superintendent by the DOE include the quality of staff in the department, the mission and organization of the department, and the morale of department staff. S. John Davis' role as state superintendent was at times restricted by elements of all three. Inheriting a staff not of his own choosing, Davis had to wait until 1985 before he had replaced all top level staff with people of his own choice. The change from the "old guard" to the new was difficult at times. Blending a Mike Cale in with a Bill Cochran and a Carl Riehm, though smooth on the surface, did not add to the cooperative working relationship within the department.

Also, the personality, if not the ability, of certain staff members limited the perceived effectiveness of the work of the department. The changing mission and organization of the department of education also hindered progress at times. William C. Bosher, Governor Allen's superintendent of public instruction, said of this period, "The perceived erosion in technical services was only so in comparison to the increase in regulation."²⁴ When the superintendent and department could not produce a conjoinment between compliance and quality, criticism was frequently heard.

However, a strong argument can be made from the evidence that in spite of problems of quality, morale, mission, and organization, the state superintendent did keep the focus and many strong programs were developed. Some might even view Davis as did one rural superintendent who called him a "big-city type administrator who let his staff argue and fuss about what they wanted to do and a good leader who got a lot out of his top staff."²⁵

School Divisions/Educational Groups: Institutional limits from both school divisions and educational interest groups are often "pressures" on the state superintendent.

²⁴Bosher, telephone conversation, 18 February 1993.

²⁵Jim D. Graham, telephone conversation, 16 February 1993.

Local superintendents and school boards play a major role in a state superintendent's ability to lead and in the direction he leads. Dr. Davis was highly cognizant of local leaders' opinions. He met frequently with superintendents, school boards, and their respective organizations. Davis was strong on receiving local input, and much of his success in implementing the Standards of Learning, Family Life Education, and other programs resulted from his ability to make stakeholders claim ownership of programs. In the Family Life Education Program Davis was in the unique position of using a state mandate to impose a program on localities that most local division superintendents thought was needed but did not want to take the initiative in installing because of potential divisiveness within a locality. The opposite extreme is seen in the Administrative Review Process. Davis was not able to get division superintendents to claim ownership; instead they saw the process as overregulation and ultimately the Educational Recognition Program was imposed on the state superintendent as a new accountability process.

Educational interest groups were generally supportive of Dr. Davis and his programs and did not restrict him very much. The Virginia Education Association liked Davis' push for increased teachers' salaries and full funding of the standards and appreciated Davis' tendency to include VEA

members on committees studying various issues. Likewise the Virginia PTA, VSBA, and VASA supported improved educational opportunities. Dr. Davis recognized the potential of these groups, communicated frequently with their leaders, and attempted to use their support to expand his operations.

The most negative and potentially restrictive educational interest group was the Virginia School Boards Association and its executive director. VSBA was opposed to mandated teachers' salaries and did not like mandates on testing sixth graders. However, even more fundamental was the fact that there appeared to be a personality clash between the state superintendent and VSBA's executive director. Dr. Frank Barham tended to be more critical of Davis than anyone else.

Constitution/Code: The Constitution of Virginia [1971} in Article VIII specifies that "the General Assembly shall provide for a system of free public elementary and secondary schools for all children of school age throughout the Commonwealth." It further states that

A superintendent of public instruction, who shall be an experienced educator, shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the General Assembly, for a term coincident with that of the Governor making the appointment, but the General Assembly may alter by statute this method of selection and term of office. The powers and duties of the superintendent shall be prescribed by law.

Chapter 3 of the Code of Virginia's Title 22.1 provides for the appointment and qualification, the oath of office, and the duties in general of the superintendent of public instruction. Three of the duties of the state superintendent are specifically prescribed by the code. First, the superintendent of public instruction serves as secretary to the board of education. Second, the superintendent provides assistance to local school authorities for the proper and uniform enforcement of school laws. Third, the superintendent prepares and furnishes forms as required by law for attendance officers, teachers, and other school officials. A fourth duty is for the state superintendent "to perform other such duties as the Board of Education may prescribe." The state superintendent then has a statutory requirement to work with the board of education and an obvious need to work with the secretary of education in the administration of the governor who appoints the state's chief school officer.

The limits described in the preceding description of Virginia's Constitution and Code are somewhat different in each state. The most significant differences are in the manner state superintendents come to office. Virginia allows for gubernatorial appointments, states like Florida have elected state superintendents, and states like Illinois have state superintendents appointed by the state board.

However, the same variables that effect institutional bounds are in play no matter which method of selection is used.

Career Themes

Politics: Political is defined in two senses in this assessment: (1) "of or pertaining to the organization or action of individuals, parties, or interests that seek to control the appointment or action of those who manage the affairs of state" and (2) "of or pertaining to the conduct of government."²⁶ In assessing a state superintendent's political acumen three resources need to be analyzed: personality, style, and understanding of how things work in a political milieu.

Personality and political prowess are correlated because one's personality has a definite impact on one's ability to conduct the affairs of government. S. John Davis' personality can be described with descriptors such as affable, strong, people-oriented, interested in others, likeable, and gregarious. In general people like Davis and Davis likes people. He moves easily among groups and with individuals in various settings. He speaks to people easily and can make small talk with a state board member or a division superintendent as readily as he can with a waitress

²⁶Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G. and C. Merriam Company, 1960), 654.

in a public restaurant. Davis' personality was an asset in his political dealings in both Fairfax County and in Richmond.

Jack Davis' political style was sophisticated. He had strong preparation in Fairfax County for the state superintendency, and he seemed to understand his natural style and cultivate it. First, Davis was a highly visible, front man for public education. He was a good speaker, he enjoyed being the center of attention in meetings, and as a result he worked effectively with organized groups of all kinds. He was conscious of public relations techniques, and he used them to his advantage and to the advantage of the cause(s) for which he was stumping.

Second, Jack Davis paid attention to individuals in a one-on-one approach. He cultivated those whom he needed to cultivate. Davis used this method in working with every type of situation--with legislators, with state board members, with division superintendents, with education interest groups, and with staff. Davis then used his individual approach to build consensus.

Third, Jack Davis worked to make things happen. He "knew how to weave his way through the maze" that was state government.²⁷ Davis was sensitive to problems that might

²⁷Joseph A. Spagnolo, interview, 7 January 1994.

arise, and he knew how to move to take action to try to avoid differences that might occur. The development and implementation of the Standards of Learning Program and the Family Life Education Program are two examples of Davis' command of the political process. Davis is generally described as a master politician by both those friendly to him and his efforts and those (fewer in number) critical of Davis and his work.

Davis' critics believe that his decisions were often based on political factors and not on what was best for education. This criticism is seen on two fronts: (1) in Davis' administration of the department of education and (2) in Davis' reaction to the Baliles/Finley shift of power from the state superintendent, state board, and department to the secretary's office. Some staff members felt that there was too much influence on Davis from outside the department and that they might not always get support from Davis. There was confusion in their minds as to when Davis was forced to do something or when he wanted to do it. The critics believed that Dr. Davis would agree with Secretary Finley in his presence and then tell staff members that he opposed Finley's position.

On a political level the question sometimes becomes

doing what one must to survive or antagonizing those in power and being replaced. While Davis' critics think he "sold them out," his friends have concluded that "Davis deserves a lot of credit for being able to work as he did in changing times"²⁸ as Baliles and Finley shifted control of education within state government. Davis obviously answered the question as would a survivor, and he did survive.

Davis' political success can be summed up as follows: he survived to work for two governors other than the one who first appointed him, he had an ability to get programs adopted and implemented, and he communicated with individuals and groups in an understandable way.

Interestingly, Mrs. Davis put her husband's political style and success in perspective when she said, "Jack makes his style look easy but it isn't. He was replaced in Fairfax and in Richmond by an intellect--neither did well."²⁹ Mrs. Davis believed that her husband exhibited the proper balance between scholarship and practical application in his leadership.

Funding: The economic resources that a state superintendent has to work with are controlled by the economy, the policies of the governor and state legislature,

²⁸William J. Burkholder, telephone conversation, 14 October 1994.

²⁹Janet C. Davis, interview, 4 February 1994.

and his own philosophy and ability to work with the hand he is dealt. Although the first few years of his tenure were marked by recession and a high rate of inflation, S. John Davis was fortunate through most of his state superintendency to have a growth-oriented economy bringing additional finances to state government. Davis had overseen increases in operating budgets and teachers' salaries in Fairfax County, and he brought the same growth philosophy into Richmond. The state board joined Davis early in pushing for full funding of the Standards of Quality and for classroom teachers' salaries in Virginia to move closer to the national average.

Both Governor Robb and Governor Baliles made education one of their top two priorities and worked with Davis, the state board, and the General Assembly to achieve the two funding goals. Over two billion dollars in new money was poured into education in the 1980s; and teachers' salaries increased to just a few hundred dollars below the national average by the end of the Baliles years.

Although Jack Davis became interested in solving the disparity problem in Virginia late in his tenure, he left office having had little impact on the problem itself. The changes that were made in the funding formula in 1986 to help solve disparity were made in the office of the secretary of education, not in the state superintendent's

domain. These changes made little impact on disparity between rich and poor school divisions, and the change in the power equation to the detriment of the state superintendent was a losing battle for Dr. Davis in the financial arena.

Instructional Initiatives: S. John Davis was proactive in instructional programming. He liked new ideas and was not afraid of change if he believed it would improve education. He was especially effective in getting new programs developed, adopted, and implemented. Some state superintendents focus on one or two program issues, but such was not Davis' approach. In Fairfax County and in Richmond a plethora of new programs were implemented during Davis' superintendency. These programs covered a wide range of areas and showed Davis' eclectic nature. Davis liked hearing about new and different approaches to improve education. He was willing to take ideas from many different sources and mold them to fit his needs.

During the Dalton years Davis actively promoted programs that included the Standards of Learning, bilingual education, teacher certification, special education, gifted education, vocational education, and the Standards of Quality. In the Robb years Davis completed and added programs in the Standards of Learning, Competency-Based Vocational Education, increased accreditation standards,

teacher certification, the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program, requirements for the National Teacher's Examination, model schools, electronic classrooms, magnet schools, Rural School Effectiveness Projects, school-industry partnerships, technology initiatives, and a home education program. The Baliles years saw the implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education with initiatives in preschool programs for four-year-olds, literacy passport testing, remediation, drug education, drop outs, gifted education, special education, vocational education, literacy, revision of teacher training programs, expanded technology, middle school restructuring, international education, and educational leadership. Also, a Family Life Education Program was developed and implemented at the behest of the General Assembly.

Davis' legacy can be evaluated by the impact of the educational initiatives that he developed. The most significant is the Standards of Learning Program. Dr. Joseph A. Spagnolo, Davis' successor as state superintendent, tried to replace the SOLs with a World Class Education Program featuring the Common Core Objectives, but his effort to implement outcome based objectives was criticized by the religious right, polarized public opinion, and was killed by Governor L. Douglas Wilder. Later Dr.

Spagnolo's successor Dr. William C. Boshier made revising the Standards of Learning as more rigorous academic standards the cornerstone of his educational improvement plan. More than twenty years after Davis developed the Program of Studies in Fairfax County, which was the forerunner of the state program, and more than fifteen years after Davis began developing the SOL's in Richmond, his Standards of Learning Program objectives are being revised with the strong possibility that they will be made regulations and not guidelines as in the Davis era.

Several of Davis' educational initiatives are also important programs in the 1990s. Family Life Education, electronic classrooms, teacher certification, accreditation standards, literacy passport testing, middle schools, state special education requirements above federal regulations, lower class size in the SOQs, technology education initiatives, and home schooling are still in place much as Davis envisioned. Likewise some of Davis' programs have not stood the test of time and are no longer in place. Among these are the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program, model schools like Varina High School, and the rural school effectiveness projects. Davis' hopes for four-year-old preschool education has been implemented by local school divisions and by the federal Head Start Program.

When Jack Davis left Fairfax County for the state

superintendency, he left with a reputation of being instructionally-oriented and curriculum-centered. His work in Richmond reenforced this assessment.

Accountability Model: The educational enterprise is owned by the public which pays for its upkeep, and those who lead in education are accountable for their stewardship. S. John Davis believed in the principles of accountability and devised accountability models in Fairfax County and in Richmond. His Program Audit in Fairfax and his Administrative Review in the Department of Education were monitoring models. Although the review process did cause many schools and school divisions to pay closer attention to regulations, it could not bridge the gap from regulation to quality assurance. To many it smacked of bureaucratic red tape at its worst. At its best the administrative review helped school divisions organize files, analyze strengths and weaknesses in meeting federal and state mandates, and learn about practices in other areas of the state that were successful.

Dr. Davis' Administrative Review Process was phased out and replaced during the Baliles years by the outcome-centered Educational Performance Recognition Program. This approach was devised to measure what schools and school divisions do by using outcome-based data to compare them to other schools and school divisions. EPR was developed

primarily by the staff of the secretary of education although Dr. Davis did have some impact. In the mid-1990s EPR, known as the Outcome Accountability Project, is still in place.

The best way to assess the accountability of the Davis era is to review results that occurred. First, stricter accreditation standards and academic requirements brought about greatly increased enrollment in mathematics, science, and foreign language at the high school level. Increased numbers of students met the requirements of the advanced studies diploma, and more students received additional education beyond high school. At the same time the dropout rate in Virginia's schools decreased significantly. Table 16 is a depiction of the dropout rate and the percent continuing education in Virginia from 1979-80 through 1989-90.

Scholastic Aptitude Test average scores in Virginia did not decrease as did the national scores during the same period. During Davis' state superintendency Virginia's verbal scores went from 426 to 430 and math scores improved from 461 to 470 with increased numbers of students taking the tests. Nationally verbal scores dropped from 427 to 424, and math scores increased from 467 to 476.

Virginia's statewide testing program saw achievement scores move above the national mean in all test areas during

Table 16**Dropout and Education After High School Percentages for
Virginia Students**

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Percent Continuing Education</u>	<u>Dropout Rate</u>
1979-80	58.5	5.4
1980-81	60.5	5.3
1981-82	60.0	4.9
1982-83	60.2	4.4
1983-84	62.4	4.5
1984-85	63.7	4.4
1985-86	65.2	4.4
1986-87	67.7	4.6
1987-88	70.4	4.7
1988-89	70.3	4.8
1989-90	71.9	4.0

Note: Data from Superintendent's Annual Report, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1979-80 through 1985-86 and Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1986-87 through 1989-90.

the Davis era and remain there. An analysis of achievement test scores in Virginia from 1981 to 1990 reveals that gains were made in reading, language, social studies, and science at grades 4, 8, and 11. In mathematics scores declined at grades 8 and 11 and increased at grade 4. Table 17 is a list of the results from the Virginia State Assessment Program for grades 4, 8, and 11 respectively during the Davis era.

Organizational Management: The final area of assessment of S. John Davis is a review of his organizational management in the department of education. Davis approached DOE management as a team builder who consulted staff and sought opinions. However, he did not hesitate to make decisions after receiving input from staff. Davis was highly organized and a master of the "what if" question. He was secure in himself and his work, and he did not hesitate to delegate although he kept up with work as it developed and often became directly involved as he did in the creation of the SOLs and the model Varina High School project. Davis' management of the department of education was successful when success is measured by the programs that were developed during his years of leadership.

However, two dissenting views indicate that some disenchantment developed over the course of Dr. Davis' superintendency. First, there was a problem of morale in

Table 17

National Percentile Ranks of Average Scores in Virginia
State Assessment Program

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Mathe-</u> <u>matics</u>	<u>Lan-</u> <u>guage</u>	<u>Social</u> <u>Studies</u>	<u>Science</u>
4	1981-82	49	53	53	52	53
	1982-83	53	56	56	53	55
	1983-84	56	59	59	54	56
	1984-85	57	59	60	55	57
	1985-86	58	60	62	57	58
	1986-87	58	61	62	57	59
	1987-88	53	60	60	60	67
	1988-89	54	60	60	59	67
	1989-90	54	62	62	61	68
8	1981-82	51	64	53	58	58
	1982-83	54	66	55	60	60
	1983-84	55	68	58	61	62
	1984-85	55	68	58	60	62
	1985-86	54	67	57	60	62
	1986-87	55	67	58	61	63
	1987-88	54	56	57	56	59
	1988-89	54	56	57	57	60
	1989-90	55	57	59	58	61
11	1981-82	52	58	53	50	54
	1982-83	54	60	55	50	54
	1983-84	56	62	56	51	56
	1984-85	58	64	58	52	57
	1985-86	59	66	59	53	58
	1986-87	60	67	61	53	60
	1987-88	58	56	62	61	62
	1988-89	57	56	61	61	62
	1989-90	56	57	62	61	63

Note: Data from Facing Up: Statistical Data on Virginia's Public Schools, Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1981-82 through 1989-90.

the department even though most staffers liked Jack Davis as a person. This dichotomy came about in part because about mid-way through Davis' tenure the "old guard" holdovers in cabinet-level staff positions began to realize that they were not in total harmony with Dr. Davis. Sandidge left early from finance; it took Boyer, Riehm and Cochran a few years longer before they decided to depart. Department staff also had concerns about some of the appointments Dr. Davis made in replacing these individuals in cabinet-level positions.

Second, the Baliles/Finley administration questioned how well the department was being run. The revised funding formula in 1986 and EPR both were developed outside of the department, because it was believed that the DOE could not handle the development as well as the administration could. Later, the Price Waterhouse study was requested by the administration, and department/board reorganization was designed to improve the way the state board and the state department operated.

Under Dr. Davis' leadership the department was active in providing technical service to localities and in carrying out its regulatory responsibilities. Dr. Davis seemed to know by instinct how things were going and where the trouble spots might be; however, Governor Baliles and Secretary Finley believed that Davis and the department did not have

research capabilities in place to provide data as needed by the administration.³⁰

As the Baliles administration ended, it still was not clear what the role and mission of the department would be in the 1990s. The administrations of Governors L. Douglas Wilder and George F. Allen would continue to modify department organizational structure and downsize the number of staff members in the department to achieve their particular objectives--educationally and politically.

Conclusion

S. John Davis was an innovative educator and a strong superintendent of public instruction who led numerous reforms, many of which were controversial. Davis was politically astute and a survivor. He was loyal to the governors for whom he worked. He was a hard worker who was an excellent representative for the state as a whole and for public education in particular.

One of the secretaries of education with whom Davis worked evaluates Davis as one of the two best superintendents in Virginia's history. This secretary considers Davis outstanding because he led "real innovation and school reform, built programs, and helped increase funding and

³⁰Donald J. Finley, interview, 29 April 1994.

teachers' salaries with comparatively few problems."³¹

Davis' predecessor Dr. Eugene Campbell gave Virginia the Basic Learning Skills Program and minimum competency testing (even if he did not want it). Dr. Joseph A. Spagnolo, Davis' successor, tried to bring about wholesale change and did not succeed. Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson served longer than any other state superintendent and was effective in helping bring about the Standards of Quality; however, Dr. Wilkerson was more cautious than Dr. Davis and did not bring about nearly as many educational improvements.

S. John Davis had a unique ability to get programs adopted and implemented. He communicated well with individuals and groups in an understandable way. He was an idea man who collected and then floated them well. He could see problems that might arise. He enjoyed being in the field with students and teachers and administrators.

If some of the luster wore away from Davis' work in the later years of his tenure, it is reasonable to conclude that a natural by-product of longevity is the opportunity it provides for criticism. The ability to survive in the pressure cooker atmosphere of the state superintendency also brings with survival more opportunities for criticism.

However, the ability to survive as superintendent of

³¹John C. Casteen, III, telephone conversation, 14 March 1994.

public instruction for a decade is also a testimony to the staying power of S. John Davis. In the decades that lie ahead education will continue to evolve as educators seek to meet the challenges of teaching young people living in a modern society. This case study of S. John Davis' professional career can help educators learn from history and build for the future upon the lessons of the past.

APPENDIX

Discussion of the Research Methodologies

Documentary Research

The primary documents for this study were located in the archives of the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia State Library in Richmond. The researcher was given free access to all documents. State board minutes, gubernatorial papers, program materials, budgets, department files, and selected correspondence were studied.

Dr. S. John Davis' personal files were also opened to the writer without restriction. Correspondence, speeches, program development documents, news clippings, and other collections of educational materials from both Davis' Fairfax and Richmond years were examined.

The Fairfax County School Board Administrative Building housed some documents important to this study. Minutes of school board meetings, financial office records, files in the public information office, and data in the testing office were made available to the writer.

The office of the Virginia Education Association quartered several important documents needed in this research. Of particular importance were state education budgets and related materials for the years that the study analyzed funding in the Commonwealth.

Other important documents were located in the Smyth County School Board Office in Marion. Superintendent's Annual Reports, statistical documents, disparity materials, department directories, Supts. memos, and educational program items dating back to the 1970s were used by the writer.

The documents were generally highly structured, and comparison from one time period to another was feasible. The records as a whole appeared to give a non-reactive report of events as they happened. Exceptions to this were found in some state board annual reports and gubernatorial report card documents which were designed to validate claims of success. Dates were particularly noted as an aid for the interviews that would follow.

Categories for data collection were derived from the documents themselves. As the researcher read through materials the first time, informal subject labels were recorded. The subjects thus listed were then sorted and grouped by topic, after which a formal title was chosen for each topic. The researcher's experience as a division superintendent during the time frame under study proved valuable in defining topics and recognizing names and terms.

The difficulties experienced were typical of documentary research. The records often reported that a decision was made, but they did not explain the reasons why

it was made. In the same way the consequences of particular actions could seldom be discerned in the records without considerable deduction. The documents that were originally used for public relations had to be read with that self-congratulatory frame of reference in mind. Minutes of board and committee meetings sometimes were vague and/or assumed knowledge that the reader might not have. Care had to be taken to avoid reading into the documents meanings or theories that were not in the minds of their authors.

Interview Research

In an effort to resolve the problems related to the documentary research and to examine the reasoning behind the documents, interviews were conducted. Two types of interviews were held: (1) personal interviews and (2) telephone interviews. Telephone conversations were resorted to when subjects lived too far away or simply could not find the time to schedule a personal interview.

The key characters were identified as Superintendent Davis and Mrs. Davis, the governors, the secretaries of education, top DOE staff members, state board members, key legislators, Fairfax school board members, top Fairfax staff members, leaders of education interest groups, and local division superintendents. These people were all interviewed except for Governor John N. Dalton, who is deceased. In

several of the groups representatives were chosen to be interviewed because of their particular relationship to Dr. Davis and his work. The purpose of the interviews was to clarify the factors that contributed to certain actions and to identify major consequences of administrative decisions. Interviewees were encouraged to give their own viewpoints and to report events from their unique perspectives.

The actual interview procedures were semi-structured and focused. On the basis of documentary research, issues were identified for each of the time periods studied, and open-ended questions were formulated in advance. A written copy of the questions for the interview was provided in advance. The interviewee was told of the purpose of the interview and invited to depart from the prepared questions whenever necessary to insure clarity on the issues.

The difficulties that were experienced included memory loss on the part of some respondents and difficulties with chronology. Interviewees were generally candid in their responses, but some were quite good at avoiding follow up questions that they perceived to be negative or controversial. Interviewees were relaxed, appeared to understand the researcher's motives, and were most cooperative. Care was taken not to lead the interviewee, and personal opinions of the researcher were not revealed until the interviews were complete if at all.

Some interviews were tape recorded, and all were carefully documented through detailed note taking by the interviewer. If gaps occurred, the interviewer asked subjects to repeat. Many answers were read back to the interviewee and accuracy of statements was confirmed. Data were then classified according to the framework developed in the documentary phase of the study. This approach seemed to provide a relatively comprehensive look at Dr. Davis' career and the historical happenings that took place.

Newspaper Research

As research progressed, it became apparent that it would be necessary to gain access to newspaper accounts for a historical perspective. The Fairfax County Public Library and S. John Davis' private files were used to learn of the popular press' reporting of events as they happened in Fairfax County during Dr. Davis' division superintendency. The Virginia Tech library housed the collection of copies of the Richmond Times-Dispatch and the Roanoke Times and World News, which were used extensively to track the course of certain events pertaining to Dr. Davis and public education during his state superintendency.

Political happenings, gubernatorial campaigns and speeches, state board meetings, important new educational programs, and budget information were often reported in the

daily newspapers. The reporters' interpretations were compared to document and interview information in an attempt to verify accuracy. Data were then classified according to the plan used in the documentary and interview phases of the study.

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