The Impact of Educators of Color: Part Two

Eric Wilson, Rockbridge Historical Society

Consolidation & Curriculum, 1965-2020

Building the Foundations of Learning:
Structuring Schools & Changing Instruction
Lylburn Downing High School, 1965
Where Part I Ended: Last Graduating Class with Last School Faculty (rear)
At Desegregation, 440 Total Black Students in Grade & High School across Lex, Rock., BV
Where & With Whom to Study?

School Consolidation Histories

Following 1965 Desegregation:
Other Demographic, Economic, Social Drivers Shape
School Systems’ Structure, Structures, Instruction
Density and Distribution of Teachers and Students

At 1965 Desegregation, Again at 1992 Consolidation:
How do these Numbers Shift, Overall?
As Stratified by Race?

(further research ahead)
Major Shifts in People and Place
Local Desegregation (1965) - HS Consolidation (1992)

Who Studies? What Communities do Students Come From?


More & More Diverse Course Offerings… Class Sizes?

Blending ‘School Cultures’?
1970s

*Buena Vista Maintains its Own System, Withdraws from Joint Planning

*Different Voting Authorities, Mechanisms, Timetables Between the School Boards, and Voter Jurisdictions of Lexington ~ Rockbridge

*Options Focus in on a Joint Lex-Rock High School
Consolidation In Early ’70s: How It Would Have Been

The consolidated, comprehensive high school proposed in the early '70s would have produced an educational experience very different from the one then being offered at the existing high schools.

It would have provided a substantially expanded curriculum, offering 75 courses of instruction. The number of course offerings was not much greater than the number available at Lexington High School — 61 — but it was significantly higher than the 47 courses at Natural Bridge and the 37 at Rockbridge.

Those 75 courses would have been taught in a very modern building designed to incorporate the progressive educational ideas then being promoted. Because of a flexible design, students could have large group lectures, seminar study and independent study within the same course.

The emphasis of the overall design of the building was on helping students learn to reason rather than to memorize.

The main two-story section of the building, flanked on either side by an auditorium and a gymnasium and cafeteria, would have contained all of the classrooms and other study spaces in the school. These areas centered on what was called an instructional materials center, a modern type of library, that stretched along the entire front of the main section on a level midway between the first and second floors. Besides the stacks of books, the IMC also included individual student carrels, lounge chairs and chairs and tables.

The classrooms were arranged in groups according to the then-popular “cluster” concept of learning. The three different clusters of classrooms planned for the school had at their centers open study spaces.

For flexibility, many spaces in the school would have been furnished with moveable furniture and ceiling-high partitions.

The auditorium at the south end of the building would have had seating for 400, a curved stage and projection and control booths. The gymnasium on the other end featured seating for more than 1,200 people and two basketball courts or one basketball court and bleachers.

A 1971 architect's sketch shows the front of what would have been the consolidated high school. The auditorium is at left and the gymnasium is on a lower level at right. The large windows across the front of the building form one wall of the instructional materials center or library. Plans for the building were dropped in 1974.

1967 Peabody Report Recommends Full Consolidation of Rockbridge, Lexington, Buena Vista Schools

Plans Move toward Consolidated Rockbridge-Lexington High School, Middle School Tuition Plans
Budget Financing Falls Apart with Rising Costs, Bond Inflation, mid-1970s;
Discussions Resume in mid-1980s
Pro: League of Women Voters Study

1988

Con: Rockbridge Education Association

The Rockbridge County School Board's decision last week to consolidate the county high school program at Lexington High School has drawn criticism from the community and city residents. The initial shock, however, was that no one had said anything on the subject to the Board.

The Rockbridge Education Association joined in the fray of speakers to present their frank dislike of the plan.

At Thursday night meeting of the school Board, Gail Spork, present of the REA, presented School Board with what she termed the "official position" of the group. The REA represents teacher members of Lexington, Rockbridge County and Lexington High School. The position reads as follows:

"The proposal has been made in haste and, if implemented, will cause chaos. The instructional personnel have not been consulted or included in any of this process. Instruction of the students is the reason for the school system's very existence."

"Our concerns are many:

- Proper planning is a fundamental key to providing a sound instructional program.
- Students have a right to be placed in an appropriate environment for their age, maturation, social needs and instruction.
- Successful programs in both the city and the county should be considered for any transition to take place.

"Planning for the wise use of personnel is crucial to implement the instructional program properly."

"Parental and public involvement is key to a successful school division providing a quality educational program.

"Funding is an absolute necessity for providing a smooth transition into any new programs and environments."

"Selection of key team leader is necessary to ensure the delivery of an instructional program by the State Board of Education."

"The students need to feel a sense of security about "their" school. '

"Pride of present and past accomplishments is fundamental in their individual successes."

"Careful deliberation of the negative and positive effects of change must be weighed in terms of efficiency and progress."

"Logistics of busing, parking, eating, playing, sporting events, health standards and extracurricular activities must be carefully planned for successful implementation."

"Institutional leadership, instructional delivery, staffing, student achievement, training of employees, community relations and community support must all be weighed for transition to become a reality and to meet the state laws and regulations, the standards of learning, the standards of quality and the accreditation standards."

"The standards of quality mandate that "each local school board shall revise, extend, and adopt a division-wide six-year improvement plan (12.1-338.3) and involve the staff and community biennially in the process."

"This plan should include an assessment of the needs of the school division, measurable objectives, strategies for achieving the objective..."
1989: County & City School Boards and Rockbridge Board of Supervisors Debate Costs, Adapt Sites, Approve & Schedule Referendum (County Residents Only)
Rockbridge County Residents Approve $13 Million in Bonds to Fund High School Consolidation:

March 29, 1989 ~ With 40% Voter Turnout, Passes by only 30 votes: 1,398 Approve – 1,368 Against
Expanded Curricular Offerings at Consolidated as Proposed by Teachers: ‘Master Plan 1987’

See Columns 2, 4: Social Studies Courses offered at RHS, LHS, NBHS, New Electives Possible Sociology & Psychology, Current Affairs, Introduction to Law, Civil War, Third World Development
Ground Broken For New Consolidated High School

By DARRYL WOODSON
The speeches have now all been made and the work is beginning.

New Consolidated County & City High School:
Rockbridge High (Fairfield), Natural Bridge, Lexington Centralize as RCHS

Groundbreaking June 27, 1990; Opens Fall 1992

Mayor Laurence Mann also talked about the cooperation between the city and county, and said that over the past 10 years, the city and county have reached a successful sharing of buildings and a regional airport.

It is often the discord that gets the attention," said Mann, "but I ask you to look at the event we witnessed today. That is cooperation. As we compare notes with counterparts in state, we find that Rockbridge County and Lexington cooperate in much more than we’ve ever thought about.

Both Mann and Rockbridge School Boardman John Swisher said they hoped the cooperation on this high school would lead to the total merger of the two school divisions.

John Ellington, representing the Lexington School Board, noted that the new high school was going to be broader and more county-wide students will be going in the same situations of higher education and doing better in those schools.

"It is truly a great day for Rockbridge County and Lexington," Del. Lacey Putney said, "and we are all looking forward to the hard work that will come in the future."
Shifts in People and Place
Local Desegregation (1965), High School Consolidation (1992)

Who Studies? What Communities do Students Come From?
More & More Diverse Course Offerings. Class Sizes?
Blending ‘School Cultures’?
How, What, Whom to Study?
Continued Curricular Re-Vision

Revised VDOE Standards (7-Year Cycle)
For History and Social Science, 2022

New State Standards & ‘Culturally Responsive School Practices’
For Teaching African-American History in Virginia:
Governor Northam’s Commission, 2020
Civil War and Postwar Eras

VS.7 The student will demonstrate an understanding of the issues that divided our nation and led to the Civil War by

a) explaining the major events and the differences between northern and southern states that divided Virginians and led to secession, war, and the creation of West Virginia;

b) describing Virginia’s role in the war, including identifying major battles that took place in Virginia; and

c) describing the roles of American Indians, whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans.

VS.8 The student will demonstrate an understanding of the reconstruction of Virginia following the Civil War by

a) identifying the effects of Reconstruction on life in Virginia;

b) identifying the effects of segregation and “Jim Crow” on life in Virginia for American Indians, whites, and African Americans; and

c) describing the importance of railroads, new industries, and the growth of cities to Virginia’s economic development.

4th Grade Virginia Studies
2015 History and Social Science Standards (for Revision 2022)
https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/history_socialscience/
Virginia: 1900 to the Present

VS.9 The student will demonstrate an understanding of Virginia during the twentieth century and beyond by

a) describing the economic and social transition from a rural, agricultural society to a more urban, industrialized society;

b) describing how national events, including women’s suffrage and the Great Depression, affected Virginia and its citizens;

c) describing the social and political events in Virginia linked to desegregation and Massive Resistance and their relationship to national history; and

d) describing the political, social, or economic impact made by Maggie L. Walker; Harry F. Byrd, Sr.; Oliver W. Hill, Sr.; Arthur R. Ashe, Jr.; A. Linwood Holton, Jr.; and L. Douglas Wilder.
Civil War and Reconstruction
VUS.7 The student will apply social science skills to understand the Civil War and Reconstruction eras and their significance as major turning points in American history by
a) describing major events and the roles of key leaders of the Civil War era, with emphasis on Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Frederick Douglass;
b) evaluating and explaining the significance and development of Abraham Lincoln’s leadership and political statements, including the significance of the Emancipation Proclamation and the principles outlined in the Gettysburg Address;
c) evaluating and explaining the impact of the war on Americans, with emphasis on Virginians, African Americans, the common soldier, and the home front;
d) evaluating postwar Reconstruction plans presented by key leaders of the Civil War; and
e) evaluating and explaining the political and economic impact of the war and Reconstruction, including the adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.
VUS.13 The student will apply social science skills to understand the social, political, and cultural movements and changes in the United States during the second half of the twentieth century by
a) explaining the factors that led to United States expansion;
b) evaluating and explaining the impact of the Brown v. Board of Education decision, the roles of Thurgood Marshall and Oliver W. Hill, Sr., and how Virginia responded to the decision;
c) explaining how the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the 1963 March on Washington, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) had an impact on all Americans;
d) analyzing changes in immigration policy and the impact of increased immigration;
e) evaluating and explaining the foreign and domestic policies pursued by the American government after the Cold War;
f) explaining how scientific and technological advances altered American lives; and
g) evaluating and explaining the changes that occurred in American culture.
Public Comment Solicited: January 29 – March 1, 2021

Revised History & Social Science Standards of Learning, to Implement 2022
**Dr. Cassandra Newby-Alexander** is Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Norfolk State University where she is also a Professor of History and Director of the Joseph Jenkins Roberts Center for African Diaspora Studies. She earned her BA in American Government and African American Studies from the University of Virginia and her PhD in American History from the College of William and Mary in 1992. She was the project director of the 1619 Conference Series, served in various academic and civic roles, received numerous grants, consulted with community groups and published extensively. Most recently she co-chaired the Governor’s Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth. Dr. Newby-Alexander has a passion for history and for educating the public about our real history.

**Dr. Derrick P. Alridge** is the Philip J. Gibson Professor of Education and an affiliate faculty member in the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies at the University of Virginia.

An educational and intellectual historian, Alridge’s work examines American education with foci in African American education and the civil rights movement.

**Dr. Rosa Atkins** is Superintendent of Charlottesville City Schools, a division that serves economically, ethnically, and racially diverse students in nine schools. During Dr. Atkins’ tenure, Charlottesville City Schools has become one of the top performing school divisions in the state with an on time graduation rate of 95.7% and one of the best Advanced Placement programs in the area. In 2011, she was named Virginia Superintendent of the Year by the Virginia Association of School Superintendents. In 2015-16, she served as President of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents. Dr. Atkins was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as one of 100 Future Ready Superintendents in 2014 and invited to the American Association of School Administrators’ Digital Consortium at the White House. In October 2016, Dr. Atkins was named as one of two national finalists for the Women in School Leadership Award for Superintendents, presented annually by the School Superintendents Association (AASA) in cooperation with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In June 2017, Governor McAuliffe appointed Dr. Atkins to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), where she serves as Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. In October 2017, Governor McAuliffe appointed Dr. Atkins to the Commonwealth Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In August 2019, Governor Northam appointed Dr. Atkins to the Commission on African American History Education. Dr. Atkins is an alumna of Virginia State University and Virginia Tech.
Virginia is the place where enslaved Africans first landed and where American representative democracy was born.

Virginia is the place where emancipation began and the Confederate capitol was located.

Virginia is the place where schools were closed under Massive Resistance, rather than desegregate and allow Black children to attend, and it is the state that elected the nation’s first African American governor.

Virginia is a place of contradictions and complexity. We take a step forward and, often, a step back.

We have to acknowledge that. We have to teach that complexity to our children, and often to our adults. We are a state that for too long has told a false story of ourselves.

The story we tell is insufficient and inadequate, especially when it comes to Black history. We must remember that Black history IS American history.

That’s why I signed an executive directive to establish a Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth.

This Commission will review our educational standards, instructional practices, content, and resources currently used to teach African American history in the Commonwealth. We want to make sure all students develop a full and comprehensive understanding of the African-American voices that contribute to our story.

While we cannot change the past, we can use it and learn from it. When we know more, we can do more.

As we reckon with the painful legacy of Virginia’s racist past, and acknowledge that it continues to shape our present, we can and must continue to act to improve the future. We must work to tell our full and true story.

It is our job—all of us that make up this diverse society—to ensure that when the next generation looks back—a generation that is hopefully more inclusive than we have been—they see a more accurate narrative, one that tells the truth, and includes everyone.
### Revisions to 1st Grade and 4th Grade VA Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Original language</th>
<th>AAHEC Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1g</td>
<td>Experiences may include but are not limited to the following: Discuss how jobs in Virginia have changed over time for all Virginians.</td>
<td>Discuss how jobs in Virginia have changed over time for all Virginians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9b.g</td>
<td>Essential Understandings Many people, and events contributed to Virginia history. Essential Knowledge Many different people, and events helped shape Virginia’s history.</td>
<td>Essential Understandings Many people, from diverse backgrounds, and events contributed to Virginia history. Essential Knowledge Many different people, cultures, and events helped shape Virginia’s history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.a.e</td>
<td>The student will describe the stories of influential people in the history of Virginia and their contributions to our Commonwealth, with emphasis on a) Powhatan; b) Pocahontas; c) Christopher Newport; d) Maggie L. Walker; e) Arthur R. Ashe, Jr.; f) Lawrence Douglas Wilder; and g) John Mercer Langston.</td>
<td>The student will describe the stories of influential people in the history of Virginia and their contributions to our Commonwealth, with emphasis on a) Powhatan; b) Pocahontas; c) Christopher Newport; d) Maggie L. Walker; e) Arthur R. Ashe, Jr.; f) Lawrence Douglas Wilder; and g) John Mercer Langston.</td>
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#### Standard | Original language | AAHEC Recommendation

| 1.6d | The student will describe the lives of people associated with major holidays, including a) George Washington Day (Presidents’ Day); b) Independence Day (Fourth of July); and c) Martin Luther King, Jr., Day. | June 16th is the day that celebrates the end enslavements of African-Americans in the United States. It is observed on June 19th. |

| 1.10a-f | Essential Understandings Not everyone was considered a citizen when our country began, and for a long time after that, even until today. Essential Knowledge Students can demonstrate good citizenship by being inclusive of others despite differences exercising civic duties like voting and paying taxes | Not everyone was considered a citizen when our country began, and for a long time after that, even until today. Essential Knowledge Students can demonstrate good citizenship by being inclusive of others despite differences exercising civic duties like voting and paying taxes |

| VS.7c | American Indians, whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans had various roles during the Civil War. | American Indians, whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans had various roles during the Civil War. |
| VS.7e | Varied roles of American Indians, whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans during the Civil War. | Varied roles of American Indians, whites, enslaved African Americans, and free African Americans during the Civil War. |

#### Standard | Original language | AAHEC Recommendation

<p>| VS.8a | Problems faced by Virginians during Reconstruction. | Problems faced by Virginians during Reconstruction. |
| VS.8b | During Reconstruction, African Americans began to have power in Virginia’s government, and black and white women could vote and hold office. | During Reconstruction, African Americans began to have power in Virginia’s government, and black and white women could vote and hold office. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>USI.3c</td>
<td>Robert E. Lee</td>
<td><strong>The resistance of white Southerners to the rights of formerly enslaved people, in Black Codes and violence, led Lincoln’s party to begin a more thorough Reconstruction two years after the war’s end.</strong> Beloved preservation of the Union was more important than punishing the South.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USI.3c</td>
<td>Frederick Douglass</td>
<td><strong>Fought for adoption of constitutional amendments that guaranteed voting rights.</strong> Was a powerful voice for human rights and civil liberties for all until his death in 1895.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USI.4a</td>
<td>Essential Understandings</td>
<td><strong>New opportunities and technological advances led to westward migration following the Civil War.</strong> Westward expansion destroyed ways of life that American Indians had practiced for centuries and dispossessed them from their homes. Had an impact on the lifestyle of American Indians...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USI.4a</td>
<td>Reasons for increase in westward expansion</td>
<td><strong>Land was enabled by the Homestead Act passed during the Civil War, giving 160 acres to those who settled the land.</strong> Opportunities for land ownership. <strong>Technological advances, including the Transcontinental Railroad.</strong> Possibility of obtaining wealth, created by the discovery of gold and silver. <strong>Desire for adventure.</strong> Desire for a new beginning for former enslaved African Americans. <strong>Immigration of workers from China who built much of the Transcontinental Railroad.</strong> Escape from cyclical poverty and white intimidation and violence.</td>
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### 11th Grade

**VA-US History Revisions**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VUS.2d</td>
<td>Interactions among American Indians, Europeans, and Africans</td>
<td>The first Africans were brought against their will to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 to work on tobacco plantations. The growth of an agricultural and mercantile economy based on large plantations in the Southern colonies and in the Caribbean, and trade in the New England colonies, led an enslaved labor force. This system eventually led to the introduction of African slavery in British North America.</td>
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<tr>
<td>VUS.7a</td>
<td>Key leaders and their roles</td>
<td>Robert E. Lee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Confederate general of the Army of Northern Virginia</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Opposed secession, but did not believe the Union should be held together by force</td>
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<tr>
<td>VUS.7b</td>
<td>Abraham Lincoln's leadership</td>
<td>Initial goal: Preserve the Union,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Initial goal: Preserve the Union, even if that meant leaving slavery in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>VUS.7c</td>
<td>Essential Knowledge</td>
<td>African Americans</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- African Americans served in the Union Army and Navy following the implementation of the Emancipation Proclamation</td>
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<td>- African Americans served as a part of contraband armies and aboard Union naval ships</td>
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<td>- Enslaved African Americans seized the opportunity presented by the appointment of Union troops to achieve freedom</td>
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<td>- Many fought with distinction and were eventually paid salaries that were equal to those of white soldiers</td>
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<td>- Enslaved African soldiers and sailors were discriminated against and served in segregated units under the command of white officers</td>
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<td>- Robert Smalls, an African American sailor and later a Union naval captain, was highly honored for his feat of bravery and heroism</td>
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<tr>
<td>VUS.7d</td>
<td>Economic characteristics of the colonial period</td>
<td>A strong belief in private ownership of property and free enterprise characterized colonial life everywhere</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Private ownership of property characterized colonial life in everyw</td>
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### Culturally Responsive Practices in Four Critical Levels

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<th>Culturally Responsive Leadership</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Safe, inclusive, and secure environments where all students are affirmed.</td>
<td>- Deploy resources and professional learning opportunities to advance cultural proficiency.</td>
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<td>- Have established and evolving pathways, access, and support to rigorous college and career preparatory classes for all students.</td>
<td>- Evaluate cultural responsive efficacy during teaching observations and evaluations.</td>
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<td>- Provide universal access to culturally relevant pedagogy that builds positive cultural identities.</td>
<td>- Establish high expectations for all students.</td>
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<td>- Have an educational environment that is free from implicit and explicit racial/ethnic and gender biases.</td>
<td>- Mitigate power imbalances based on race, culture, ethnicity, and class.</td>
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<td>- Produce high student achievement rates in state accountability (the most basic outcome).</td>
<td>- Establish policies and procedures to advance anti-racist school culture and climate.</td>
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<td>- Have systems in place to mitigate racial or cultural tensions.</td>
<td>- Ensure recruitment and retention of teachers of color and demonstrable cultural responsiveness competencies.</td>
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<td>- Have a climate in which all students and staff have a sense of membership and belonging and provide forums both inside and outside of the classroom where everyone can learn about each other’s diverse backgrounds.</td>
<td>- Establish mentoring practices for new teachers and staff in culturally responsive pedagogy and practice.</td>
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**Recommendations from 2020 Virginia Governor’s Commission**

*Competencies, not just Content*
Recommemations from 2020 Virginia Governor’s Commission
Focus on Competencies, not just Content

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culturally Responsive Educators</th>
<th>Culturally Responsive Pedagogy/Teaching</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Reflect on their own cultural lens.</td>
<td>● Is student-centered.</td>
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<td>● Model high expectations for all students.</td>
<td>● Identifies and nurtures students’ cultural strengths to promote student achievement.</td>
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<td>● Promote respect for student differences.</td>
<td>● Affirms cultural and individual identity.</td>
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<td>● Recognize and redress bias in the system.</td>
<td>● Uses cultural differences as assets necessary to inform the development of instructional resources.</td>
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<td>● Challenge stereotypes, prejudices, racism, and other forms of intolerance, and oppression.</td>
<td>● Mediates power imbalances based on race, culture, ethnicity, and class.</td>
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<td>● Are change agents for social justice and academic equity.</td>
<td>● Utilizes students’ culture as a vehicle for learning.</td>
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<td>● Cultivate relationships beyond the classroom anchored in affirmation, mutual respect and</td>
<td>● Establishes high expectations for all students and provides support to ensure success.</td>
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<td>validation.</td>
<td>● Diverse groups from all rings of culture are represented, validated, and affirmed.</td>
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<td>● Engage in reflection of their beliefs, behaviors and practices.</td>
<td>● Establishes a 3-pronged approach: institutional, personal, and instructional.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Communicate in linguistically and culturally responsive ways.</td>
<td>○ <strong>Institutional</strong>: recognizes a need for reform of school policies and procedures based on cultural factors.</td>
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<td>○ <strong>Personal</strong>: requires teachers to become culturally responsive.</td>
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<td>○ <strong>Instructional</strong>: provides educational materials that are culturally affirming and aid in delivering culturally responsive instruction.</td>
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January 2021: Governor’s Commission Webinar with Virginia Humanities, Virginia Africana, Collaboration with School Administrators, Faculty, Museum & History Professionals
Diamond-Green Hill Historical Walking Tour & Lylburn Downing School History Scavenger Hunt

Waddell Elementary School & Lylburn Downing Middle School Projects (2015 →)
First Baptist Church, Lylburn Downing Alumni Room ~ LCS School Board Room
Panelists:

Byron Winchester, LDMS ’14, RCHS ’18
Halle Kline, LDMS, ’13, RCHS ’17
Marylin Alexander, Lex. Vice-Mayor, former LCS School Bd.
Dr. Tim Diette, LCS School Board Chair
Dr. Phillip Thompson, RCPS Superintendent

Audience Questions, Comments