

Virginia Asian Advisory Board
General Board Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2018

Patrick Henry Building
1111 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
West Reading Room
10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Ms. Julia Chun (Chair); Ms. May Nivar (Vice Chair); Ms. Mona Siddiqui (Secretary); Mr. Osman Parvaiz (Interim Treasurer); Ms. Atiqua Hashem; Mr. Eric Lin; Ms. Vicki Mirandah; Mr. Rummy Mohta; Mr. Ssunny Shah; Mr. J.R. Smith; Ms. Karla Soloria; Mr. Leonard Tengco;

Board Members Absent:

Mr. Hassan Ahmad; Mr. Razi Hashmi; Ms. Komal Mohindra; Mr. Patrick Mulloy

Administration

Ms. Meryem Karad (Governor's Liaison); Mr. Saman Aghaebrahim (Governor's AAPI Outreach Director); Mr. Justin Bell (VAAB Counsel); Secretary Atif Qarni (Secretary of Education/VAAB Ex Officio)

Guests:

Ms. Afreen Goottee; Ms. Ghazala Hashmi; Mr. Salman Parvaiz; Ms. Leah Walker

Agenda:

- 10:30 Welcome and Introductions, Julia Chun (Chair)
[Agenda Overview, Approval of Meeting Minutes]
- 10:35 Governor's Update, Meryem Karad (Governor's Liaison)
[Budget Legislation, Upcoming Meeting Dates, Reimbursement]
- 10:35 Education Introduction, Mona Siddiqui (Secretary, Chair of Education Committee)
- 11:15 Presentation by Leah Walker, Director of Office of Equity and Community Engagement, Virginia Department of Education
- 11:45 Presentation by Atif Qarni, Secretary of Education
- 12:00 Lunch: Teacher's Panel, Moderated by Mona Siddiqui
- 1:00 Break
- 1:15 Committee Breakouts
- 2:15 Committee Updates
- 2:30 Elections
- 3:00 Public Comment
- 3:30 Adjourn

Welcome & Introductions (Julia Chun)

- Ms. Chun called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m.
- Ms. Chun asked Board members to review proposed meeting minutes from the October 18, 2018 VAAB meeting.
- Ms. Siddiqui proposed a motion to approve the VAAB meeting minutes of the October 18, 2018 VAAB meeting. A second to the proposed motion was made by Mr. Lin.
- The Board approved the meeting minutes unanimously, pending the following corrections: removal of Ms. Nivar's presence, Ms. Siddiqui's name correction on page 1 and Mr. Parvaiz's name correction on page 5.

Governor's Update (Meryem Karad)

Ms. Karad informed the Board that the Governor is currently putting together a budget proposal and legislative proposals for the upcoming legislative session. Highlights of her update include the following:

- Collaborative effort to redesign the VCCS program.
- New educational pathway to become an early childhood teacher
- Initiative to eliminate road injury and deaths called Towards Zero Death; this is a national strategy to improve highway safety. There is information on the Secretary of Transportation's website.
- VA Unemployment rate has been unchanged at 2.9% - below the national rate.
- Amazon selected 2 VA cities to invest 2.5 billion to establish a new headquarters that will bring 25,000 high paying jobs over 12 years. VA estimates creation of 2200 direct/indirect jobs, including a statewide investment to improve graduates in computer science.
- Mr. Parvaiz raised the following question: How will Amazon impact the Commonwealth?

Board members discussed the positive impact and concerns regarding the impact of Amazon's entry into the Virginia landscape, particularly to consequences to small businesses. The group discussed the possibility of setting up a town hall to discuss the impact of Amazon coming to Virginia - not just in Northern Virginia, but the entire Commonwealth. The Board discussed engagement with the Virginia Latin Advisory Board and the Maryland Asian Advisory Board in this endeavor.

- Ms. Chun introduced the idea of scheduling two Town Halls in 2019 in addition to four board meetings.
- Mr. Smith suggesting a meeting with VEDP – to discuss Governor's visit to India.
- Ms. Karad proposed the following dates for 2019 VAAB Meetings:
 - February 28, 2019 (Richmond)
 - May 10, 2019 or May 31, 2019 – including AAPI reception (Richmond)
 - September 13 or 20 – Meeting and Town Hall in Roanoke – possibly a 2-day meeting
 - December 11, 2019
- Mr. Mohta suggested that Town Halls precede board meetings by a couple of weeks so we can use board meeting to debrief.

- February 28 - Board meeting and Town Hall – to discuss the secondary Impact of Amazon
- Planning committee for this Town Hall: J.R. Hassan (potential chair), Oz, Razi (potential chair)
- Mr. Karad provided reimbursement forms to VAAB members.

Education Focus Area Introduction (Mona Siddiqui)

Ms. Siddiqui made the following introduction on the topic of public education:

- The topic of public education is a highly regarded issue area in the AAPI community. It's traditionally been an integral part of the VAAB annual reports over the years. Some of the issues that the Education committee has been thinking about this year include:
 - Enhancing cultural competence in K-12 and higher education, with a focus on English proficiency and introducing a cultural competence component in the state licensure process;
 - Cultivating leadership and career opportunities for Asians in K-12 and in higher education, especially in the area of workforce development for professionals, leadership and educational development programs for students, and grant resources for Asian communities in Virginia;
 - Mental health awareness as it relates to the unique experiences of AAPI students.

Today, we will hear the insights of a variety of public education leaders in our Commonwealth. First we will hear from Leah Walker, The Director of the Office of Equity and Community Engagement at the VDOE.

Next, we will be joined by our Ex Officio Board Member Secretary of Education, Atif Qarni. Who we are fortunate to have his vested engagement with our Board, as he has participated in almost every Board meeting we have had this year, and even provided guidance informally to the Education Committee.

And to top it off, we will be hearing from AAPI educators who are in the trenches of doing the day to day work of teaching our youth.

Presentation by Leah Walker, Director of Office of Equity and Community Engagement, Virginia Department of Education

[See attached powerpoint presentation]

Presentation by Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni

Highlights include the following:

- The Governor announced a robust Education budget including proposals for 5% salary teacher increase, \$25 million for wrap around services for at-risk youth, low interest funding for maintenance of old school buildings; \$36 for school counselors, including addressing mental health issues (suicide prevention).

- The Governor needs VAAB's help to talk to legislators to support Governor's budget. I

Teacher's Panel (Moderated by Mona Siddiqui)

The following Virginia public educators participated in the panel:

- Afreen Yusuf Gootee has been an educator for 32 years in Hanover County. She has taught grades 4-12, currently teaching 6-8th in an alternative education facility which has middle and high school students. She was one of the top 5 winners of the National Education Association Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence this year and was the state winner for Virginia Education Association Award for Teaching Excellence last year. Afreen has also been an active member of the Virginia Education Association for over 20 years where she serves on their Board of Directors, and have served many other leadership positions in the organization including District and Regional President and former Hanover President. She has led the charge to change many laws in education through the National Education Association for religious holidays and multicultural issues. She also serves on the Virginia Education Association's Diversity Training Cadre - teaching Virginia educators about the importance of cultural blending in the workplace.
- Dr. Ghazala Hashmi is Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and a Professor of American literature at Reynolds Community College in Richmond, Virginia. The Center focuses on faculty development and on the administration of the college's online learning programs. Dr. Hashmi has been involved in issues of access and equity within higher education, diversity and multiculturalism within the classroom, and community college teaching and learning for over 25 years. She currently serves as a board member for the Richmond Chapter of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities and as a member of college's Committee on Diversity and Inclusion. Her areas of research include postcolonial literature, women and Islam, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Mr. Salman Parvaiz has been a public school teacher for 17 years. His undergraduate degree is in Physics with a minor in Economics from the University of Virginia. Mr. Parvaiz also has a Masters in Public School Administration and Supervision from the University of Virginia. He started his teaching career in 2002 as a Physical Science teacher for Brookland Middle School. In 2004 he was asked to build a Physics program at Deep Run High School where he taught for 9 years. During his time at Deep Run High School, Mr. Parvaiz piloted the AP-C Physics course for Henrico County Public Schools. After three consecutive years of Mr. Parvaiz proving the merits of an AP-C Physics curriculum, Henrico County Public Schools made the course available within all of its high school Science Departments. As a teacher at Deep Run, Mr. Parvaiz was also asked to develop a Men's Tennis Program and coach the first varsity Field Hockey team for Henrico Count Public Schools. In 2013, Mr. Parvaiz transitioned to Henrico High School in an effort to rebuild its Physics program. He taught for Henrico High School for 5 years while creating a comprehensive Physics curriculum for all students interested in the subject. At Henrico High School, Mr. Parvaiz initiated the PBIS Positive Referrals and Community Outreach programs. In 2018, his desire to work with smaller classroom sizes, an integrated science curriculum and coding as part of every subject area led him to join CodeRVA Regional High School. Having seen the benefits of a PBIS Positive Referrals program, Mr. Parvaiz has introduced the concept at CodeRVA as well. He is a big proponent of coaching students through modeling proper behavior

and providing rewards for those who show improvement whether it be academic or behavioral. Mr. Parvaiz is also a big supporter of smaller classroom sizes and team-teaching within all classroom settings.

The following issues were discussed:

- The experiences that led them to become educators
- Positive and Challenging experiences as educators
- Greatest changes in the field of education

Elections

The following VAAB members were elected to the Executive Committee for 2019:

Chair: May Nivar

Vice Chair: Oz Parvaiz

Secretary: Komal Mohindra

Treasurer: J.R. Smith

Chair-elect May Nivar thanked outgoing Chair Julia Chun and Secretary Mona Siddiqui for their service on the Executive Committee.

Public Comment

- Seema Sethi, President and CEO of Society for Enrichment of Asians provided information regarding an upcoming documentary created to raise awareness about domestic violence in AAPI communities.
- All attendees introduced themselves.

Next Meeting Date

- February 28, 2018 in Richmond, VA

Adjournment

- Mr. Ssunny Shah proposed a motion to adjourn. A second to the proposed motion was made by Ms. Karla Soloria. Meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.