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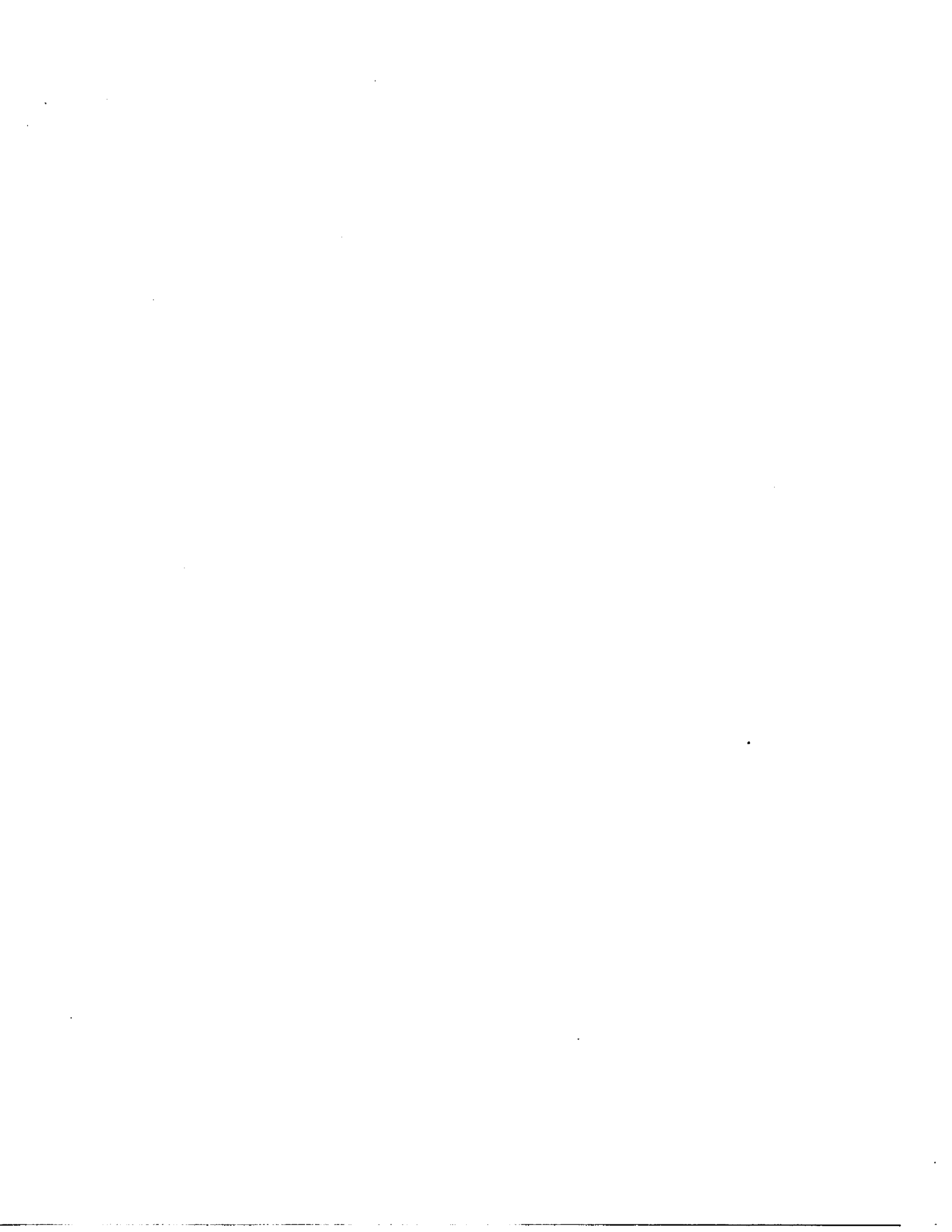
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**THE CHARACTERISTICS AND DEGREES OF
DE FACTO CONSENSUS CONCERNING
THE MISSION OF K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN VIRGINIA**

A Dissertation

Presented to

**The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William and Mary in Virginia**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education**

by

Christopher Ryan Gareis

May 1996

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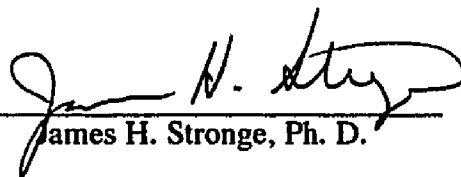
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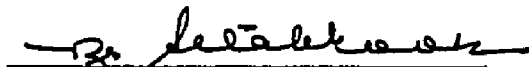

Robert S. Estabrook, Ed. D.

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c. r. g.

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**THE CHARACTERISTICS AND DEGREES OF
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Abstract

The history of public education in the United States is replete with attempts to define the purpose, aims, or mission of K-12 public education at the local, state, and national levels. However, given the historical precedent of the local control of schools and the legal precedent of state-level governance of public education, this study sought to address the more limited question of the purpose of K-12 public education in the state of Virginia. Specifically, within the context of the contemporary educational planning theory of strategic planning, this study sought to determine what content characteristics concerning the mission of public education were shared among the school divisions in the state of Virginia. Through content analysis of division-level mission statements, the study identified not only the content but also the degrees at which such content was shared among division-level mission statements. The study further addressed the similarities and differences between the mission statements of school divisions and that of the state itself, a statement written by Thomas Jefferson some two hundred years ago. The findings illuminate the relative presence and absence of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia.

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**THE CHARACTERISTICS AND DEGREES OF
DE FACTO CONSENSUS CONCERNING
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Chapter 1: The Problem

We the People...

In 1787, Thomas Jefferson, a native of the Commonwealth of Virginia, penned the words which for more than two centuries have served to introduce the constitution of the most powerful nation on Earth. Jefferson began the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States with three simple words: "We the People." These words subtly and powerfully captured the purpose of the nation's democratic government. And in those words and the words that follow them, Jefferson resolutely stated that the government of the United States would be a government of and for "the People."

More than two hundred years after its writing, the Preamble remains a vital and powerful statement of the purpose of the federal government of the United States. Jefferson's words are emotionally quoted by public officials, solemnly cited by Supreme Court justices, and dutifully memorized by school children. Indeed, Jefferson's words hold a near-sacred place in the American experience, for in a single sentence they define and limit the role of the United States government to six basic ends: to bind the individual states together, to establish justice in the land, to ensure peace in the nation, to defend the nation, to provide for the general welfare of all citizens, and to protect the liberty of all citizens for all time.

The Preamble of the Constitution clearly and concisely states the mission of the government of the United States of America, and that mission does not

include a responsibility of the federal government to educate the populace. Instead, the education of the American public is a responsibility that has been taken up by the states, and, through historical practice, this responsibility has largely been financed, managed, and indeed shouldered by local communities (Tyack, 1974). Thus, although Jefferson's Preamble to the Constitution eloquently, clearly, and memorably states the purpose of the United States government, the purpose of the country's educational system has been disparately spread among the fifty states and approximately 16,000 local school divisions (McCarthy & Cambron, 1981). What is the mission of public education?

Background of the Study

Free government rests, as does all progress, upon the broadest possible diffusion of knowledge, and...the Commonwealth should avail itself of those talents which nature has sown so liberally among its people by assuring the opportunity for their fullest development by an effective system of education throughout the Commonwealth.

Thomas Jefferson, Article 1, § 15,
of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Virginia
(Virginia Department of Education, 1992, p. 7)

Not found among the six basic responsibilities defined in the Preamble of the United States Constitution is that of providing for the education of the nation's citizens. Indeed, despite Jefferson's own strong belief in the importance of universal and free education for the survival of a democratic nation (Pedan, 1982), education is conspicuous in both the Preamble and the Constitution of the United States federal government only in its absence. Seemingly, however, when one

reviews the Constitution of Jefferson's home state of Virginia, the omission is rectified--at least at the level of state government.

In Article 1, § 15, of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Virginia, Jefferson resolved that the crucial role of education in the smooth running of a democratic nation required that a system of public education be established in the state (Virginia Department of Education, 1992). Moreover, Jefferson stated why--that is, for what purpose--an educational system should be established. In the simplest terms, a democracy utterly depends upon an educated citizenry. Therefore, in Jefferson's view, the mission, or overall purpose, of public education in the state of Virginia is to ensure the successful functioning of a democratic society (Virginia Department of Education, 1992).

As a testament to the durability of Jefferson's vision of public education in Virginia, the Commonwealth has retained his words as the mission of public education for more than two hundred years. In fact, Virginia's legislature reaffirmed its commitment to Jefferson's words and philosophy in its 1971 rewriting of the Constitution of Virginia by readopting Article I, § 15. The Virginia Department of Education prints Jefferson's Article I, § 15, of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Virginia as the opening and cornerstone law of its official publication Virginia School Laws (1992).

Jefferson's immutable words state the broad purpose of public education in the state of Virginia. As such, in the contemporary jargon of educational planning, Article 1, § 15, of the Constitution of Virginia serves as a kind of mission statement of public education in the Commonwealth. In short and with some liberty taken regarding the ordering of Jefferson's words, the mission of

public education in Virginia is to ensure “the broadest possible diffusion of knowledge” among the state’s people so that they may enjoy “the opportunity for their fullest development” and so both the state and the nation will enjoy “free government” and “progress.” Such is the mission of public education in Virginia as articulated at the state level (Virginia Department of Education, 1992, p. 7).

But what of the mission of public education as articulated at the local level? In Virginia, similar to all of the other states in the Union (except for Hawaii), the actual administration, management, and “supervision” of public education is vested in the school boards and superintendents of the local school divisions (McCarthy & Cambron, 1981; Ravitch, 1983; Swanson & King, 1991; Tyack, 1974; Virginia Department of Education, 1992, p. 16). Indeed, “although education is state controlled in this nation, it is mainly locally administered” (McCarthy & Cambron, 1981, p. 5). Virginia, in fact, presently has 132 local school divisions, and the Virginia Supreme Court has validated the fundamental control of local school divisions over public education. In 1978, the court concluded that the state legislature’s “general supervision” of schools did not include the authority to supervise schools. This authority has been reserved for local school divisions (*School Board of City of Richmond V. Parham*, 1978). Although loosely bound together in a statewide system of public education, these 132 school divisions are largely autonomous organizations empowered by the state to “operate and maintain the public schools in the school division and determine the length of the school term, the studies to be pursued, the methods of teaching and the government to be employed in the schools” (Virginia Department of Education, 1992, p. 73). The purview and power of local school

divisions is indeed broad--even such that local school divisions are charged with setting their own "objectives," or direction, as a part of their regular organizational planning (Virginia Department of Education, 1992, p. 165). Presumably, it is this charge that has also empowered school divisions to articulate in their own manners the very mission of public education in their localities. (See Appendix B.)

Thus, in light of the stated Jeffersonian mission of public education in Virginia and the loosely coupled arrangement of 132 empowered localities which actually operate schools and teach children, several questions arise regarding the articulated mission(s) of public education in Virginia. Most fundamentally, one may ask, is there de facto consensus among the 132 local school divisions regarding the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia? In other words, is there evidence of consensus among Virginia's already-existing mission statements--consensus not necessarily achieved by design but evident nonetheless? If so, on what is there consensus and on what is there apparent disagreement? And, one may further inquire, is there consensus between the division-level statements of mission and the statement penned by Jefferson for the state some two hundred years ago? These fundamental questions drove this study of the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus among school divisions in Virginia concerning the

purpose of K-12 public education in the state as articulated in division-level mission statements and (2) to determine the characteristics of consensus between division-level mission statements and the mission of K-12 public education as articulated in the Virginia Constitution.

Research Questions

Although driven by the fundamental purposes stated above, the study was designed around the following four research questions:

1. Do the mission statements of Virginia school divisions share certain content characteristics?
2. To what degrees (i.e., at what frequencies) are such content characteristics shared?
3. What content is not shared widely among the mission statements of Virginia school divisions?
4. What shared content among division-level mission statements is also shared with Virginia's state-level statement of mission, as articulated in the Virginia Constitution?

Significance of the Study

I assure you that nothing will be gained by tearing down public education and making the public school classroom the Bosnia of America's competing factions. When a community is divided, the children always suffer. Good common sense should tell us that now is the time for quiet voices to be heard in the search for common ground.

Richard W. Riley, U. S. Secretary of Education (1994)

In an address to the National Press Club in September 1994, U. S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley articulated a practical need for consensus among voices in American public education. In the midst of turbulent restructuring efforts that have gripped public education in America for more than a decade (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), Riley entreated a "search for common ground." His contention was two-fold. First, the problems that confront public education are too big for any one person or single group to tackle; instead, a united effort among public education stakeholders is required. Second, to bring about a united effort, the myriad stakeholders in public education must begin to mend their differences by first identifying the principles upon which they agree. Thus, Riley appealed to the "quiet voices" to find and give voice to the common ground--that is, consensus.

This study of Virginia's public school division mission statements to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus among them represents a practical effort to find and give voice to the common ground of K-12 public education in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The study was exploratory and descriptive in nature, but its findings illuminate issues regarding the use of strategic planning in education and the changing roles of local, state, and federal agencies in educational governance. As such, the study is of interest and benefit to many stakeholders in public education in localities, in Virginia itself, in other states, and at the national level.

The results of the study may be of particular interest to local school divisions that wish to learn and perhaps work in partnership with other school divisions to provide inter-divisional programs for students and other stakeholders.

The Virginia Department of Education and the state legislature may employ results of the study to serve better the interests and needs of their constituents at the state level by understanding the shared mission of K-12 education across the state, especially with regard to the mission of K-12 public education as articulated at the state level in the Constitution of Virginia. Other states may use the results of the study to inform their own planning efforts, and the U. S. Department of Education may use the study to help serve the educational needs of Virginia and other states through existing or new federal programs. The study also may be of value to national educational organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Science Foundation, and the National Education Association, which may use the results to further their efforts to establish national standards of curriculum and instruction (Gleick, 1995). The results of the study also enhance the quantity and quality of research concerning educational mission statements by investigating the practical role that mission statements have taken in educational planning and leadership (Conley, 1993). As such, the results may be of particular interest to theorists and practitioners of educational planning. Finally, the results are certainly of value to teachers, future teachers, and teacher trainers, the three of which directly bear the charge of teaching children. Moreover, since children are the central stakeholders in public education and, therefore, the supposed benefactors of the mission we adults have set for our schools, it is most important that all stakeholders in public education comprehend what the collective words of the state's division-level and Constitutional mission statements of public education say and where, if at all, there is common ground among them.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

For the entire history of the United States, Americans have wrestled with the notion, practice, and purpose of public schooling, and the history of public education is replete with movements, trends, and innovations that have brought our schools and school systems to their present forms. One lens through which to view this history is that of the long series of documented articulations of the purpose of public education.

In the early colonial period of American history, perhaps the first articulation of the purpose of public education came in the form of the "Old Deluder Satan" Act of 1647. This act required townships of certain sizes in Massachusetts to establish schools to teach children reading and writing and, in some cases, Latin. The Puritan colonists were intent upon ensuring that an uneducated lower class similar to that of England did not develop in their colony. They also were intent upon ensuring their children's commitment to religion by enabling them to read the Bible (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993).

One hundred years later, as the American colonies hesitantly neared nationhood, Benjamin Franklin articulated a proposal for the establishment of an academy in Pennsylvania to educate older youths beyond the primary level. Franklin broke from the historical precedent of education-for-religion and promoted instead a more practical and utilitarian purpose for education. He concluded his proposal with the following:

The idea of what is true merit should also be often presented to youth, explained and impressed on their minds, as consisting in an inclination

joined with an ability to serve mankind, one's country, friends and family; which ability is (with the blessing of God) to be acquired or greatly increased by true learning; and should indeed be the great aim and end of all learning.

(in Willis, Schubert, Bullough, Kridel, & Holton, 1994, p. 23)

Nearly thirty years after Franklin's proposal, the American colonies became the United States, and nearly one hundred years of a period of nationalism defined the evolution of public education. According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1993), "A new mission for education which began to emerge during the Revolutionary period, continued through the national period. Many leaders began to link free public schooling with the ideas of popular government and political freedom" (p. 71). Notably, it was during this period that Thomas Jefferson articulated the purpose of public education in his home state of Virginia, and the trend in education away from religious purposes and towards promoting an educated citizenry for the good of the nation was widely articulated and pursued.

The spirit of nationalism continued well into the 1800s, and early public education proponents such as Henry Barnard and Horace Mann crusaded for the establishment of public education systems. Barnard, the first U. S. Commissioner of Education, wrestled with and articulated his conception of the modern common school in a series of annual reports in the 1830s and 40s. Horace Mann, a Massachusetts senator, rose to national prominence as a spokesman of the common school movement. Through writings and speeches, Mann articulated a position that public education should serve to provide for the intellectual, moral, and civic development of all citizens (Willis, et al., 1994).

Many other figures played prominent roles in the discourse over the purpose of public education in the United States, but a long series of reports by national commissions serves to illustrate the various articulations of the evolving purpose of public education.

The late 1800s witnessed a concerted effort to articulate the aims of public education on a national level. Between 1893 and 1895, three committees were established by the National Education Association (NEA) to attempt to bring about some consensus of opinion in the veritable sea of emerging educational theories of the late 19th century. The work of the Committee of Fifteen, the Committee of Ten, and the Committee on College Entrance Requirements articulated a sequenced conceptualization of education from primary school through college. Many of the components of these proposals survive today (one hundred years later), including the compartmentalization of subject matter, the college preparatory curriculum, and the credit-bearing courses model for measuring academic preparation (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993; Willis, et al., 1994).

The early 1900s brought a new perspective to the debate, however, when the Progressive movement advocated a more child-centered focus for the purpose of public education. In 1918, the NEA responded with another commission which articulated the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education. This document indicated an expanding mission of public education, one which moved beyond academic subjects and good citizenship to a recognition of education's role in promoting the physical, mental, and emotional development of children (Willis, et al., 1994).

Later in the 1900s, following the Great Depression, the NEA issued yet another report which addressed the purpose of public education quite clearly. Titled The Purpose of Education in an American Democracy, it stressed the purpose of public education as promoting a range of intellectual, social, economic and civic aims. Included among these were such notably non-academic objectives as developing recreational interests, learning friendship, practicing courtesy, and many others (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993). The mission of public education was expanding well-beyond the subject-centered focus of the 1800s.

World War II and the Cold War era brought about a backlash to the movements of the early 1900s. Following the launch of Sputnik in 1959, the NEA issued a report that echoed the nation's concerns about a loss of excellence in American public education. One result was a realigning of the purpose of public education with more conservative aims such as academic achievement and the protection of national interests (Conant, 1959; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993).

In the three-and-a-half decades since the launch of Sputnik, public education has continued to be buffeted by storms of realignment, revision, revolution, and reform (Cuban, 1984; Nasaw, 1981; Ravitch, 1983; Tyack, 1974). Arguably, one of the most influential national articulations regarding the mission of public education was from the Commission on Excellence in Education which, in 1983, concluded that a widespread failure of public education had put the nation itself at risk (National Commission on Excellence, 1983). This report knelled a new era of introspection and reform among educators, law-makers, and citizens alike regarding the mission of public education in the United States. One significant response five years following the Commission's report was an

articulation of six national education goals by President Bush and the governors of the 50 states. Dubbed "Goals 2000," the national education goals constituted a concerted attempt to define the broad purposes of education for the nation and to pull America's public schools from what the Commission and a growing segment of the population viewed as the brink of utter failure (U. S. Department of Education, 1991).

The call of the Commission on Excellence in Education struck not only a cord at the national level, but it also has reverberated for more than a decade throughout the fifty states to the roughly 16,000 local school divisions that constitute the American system of public education. The result has been some thirteen years of contemporary school reforms. For example, Goals 2000 was the impetus for the development of national standards by various educational organizations, including the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Council of Teachers of Math, the National Science Foundation, and others. In response, however, others have argued against national standards and for locally devised standards of achievement (Eisner, 1993; O'Neil, 1995). As another example of the tumultuousness of school reform in recent years, the 1980s have been characterized as a decade of "state-led education reform" (O'Neil, 1993, p. 8) in which legislatures throughout the nation enacted piecemeal mandates in the name of "systemic reform." By way of contrast, Alexander (1993) characterized the 80s as "as decade of reform [in which the] emphasis has shifted from fixing schools to breaking the mold" (p. 9).

Such examples serve to illustrate that for more than a decade, educational planning has been consumed by attempts at comprehensive reform, with uncertain

results. Throughout, however, the question of the purpose of public education has remained central to the debate. Thus, motivated in part by the past decade-and-a-half of conflicts and conflagrations that have shaped public education, school divisions have dusted off their old statements of educational philosophy and other articulations of their institution's purpose and have had to ask themselves the most fundamental of questions in educational planning--the same question that communities, committees, and individuals have tried to set forth answers to for over two hundred years: What is our purpose?

Strategic Planning in Education

In response to the lenses of criticism and doubt through which public education has been viewed for the past decade, a plethora of educational reforms have been initiated among America's public schools. One area of interest that has grown amid the various restructuring initiatives is the adaptation of several promising theories of business management in the public school setting. Total Quality Management (TQM), site-based management, and various school choice plans are all examples of contemporary theories of business management that have been adopted by school administrators in hopes of making public schools more efficient and more effective (Gleick, 1995). Also included in this embrace of contemporary business management theory is strategic planning. According to Raze (1986), the widespread use of strategic planning in public education arose in the early 1980s in response to calls for school reform. Simultaneously, the hallmark of strategic planning--the mission statement--emerged as a prevalent vehicle for articulating the purpose of an educational organization.

As a theory, strategic planning posits that an organization--whether a private corporation or a public school division--can survive in today's rapidly changing world only if it has a clear vision of its purpose. With the public temperament increasingly unhappy with the nation's educational systems and the advent of threats to funding for public education coming from advocates of voucher systems, charter schools, and privatization, the literal survival of public education is a very real concern (Gleick, 1995). Often, the reason an organization fails is because it loses sight of what its true purpose--its true mission--is. Without a clear understanding of who its clients are and what products or services it is trying to deliver to them, an organization becomes misdirected, inefficient, ineffective, and, eventually, a failure. These are threats to public education. Thus, the strategic planning process--whether in a corporate or an educational organization--begins by requiring an organization to define its very reason for existing in a mission statement (Cook, 1990; McCune, 1986; National Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 1987).

Mission Statements in Education

From grocery store chains to major international corporations to local public schools, the presence of a mission statement is clear evidence of long-range, strategic planning. And in more than two decades of systems-based educational planning, the role and definition of mission statements have remained staunchly consistent. In 1972, for instance, Kaufman wrote, "A mission is an overall job--a product, a completed service, or a change in the condition of something or somebody--that must be accomplished" (p. 53). And neither

Kaufman nor other educational planners have strayed far from this definition, as the following chronological list of examples shows:

The mission statement describes the reason the school district exists (Lewis, 1983, p. 55).

An organization's mission projects an image of what the organization is going to do; it may include how and where it will be done. The mission should have a sense of direction, suggest activities or programs, and provide motivation (McCune, 1986, p. 58).

An organization's mission statement...establishes what the organization plans to do, and for whom, plus the major philosophical premises under which it will operate (Below, Morrissey, & Acomb, 1987).

A mission is the shared vision of people in an organization about what their ultimate purpose really is (NASSP, 1987, p. 9).

A mission statement is an overall job--an outcome, output, or product; a completed service; or a change in the condition of something or somebody--that must be accomplished (Kaufman, 1988, p. 92).

[A mission is] a statement that expresses the dominant values and feelings about what the school system should be about or what in a broad and general way it should be trying to accomplish and what it should stand for (Mauriel, 1989, pp. 4-5).

The mission statement should be a declaration of the special purposes of an institution and whom it intends to serve (Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91, p. 28).

A mission statement provides a simple direction without specific criteria for measuring our success (Kaufman & Zahn, 1993, p. 73).

A mission statement is a clearly articulated expression of an organization's purpose or reason for existing. As such, it is intended to serve not only the organization, but also its personnel and its clients. By defining an organization's basic purpose, a mission statement serves to characterize that organization in terms of what it is trying to accomplish.

This focus on an organization's expected accomplishments, or the outcomes of its work, helps that organization to avoid unnecessary duplications, frustrated employees, poorly utilized resources, and wasted time and money (Lewis, 1983). Moreover, a clearly stated purpose can also serve to clarify short- and long-term objectives (Herman, 1989), identify strengths and weaknesses in the organization (Lewis, 1983), and determine budget priorities (Kotler & Fox, 1985). Indeed, defining the mission is critically important because it affects everything else--direction, planning, implementation, and the very success of an organization (Kotler & Murphy, 1981; NASSP, 1987).

It should be noted, however, that although the concept of a "mission statement" is relatively new to educational planning, the practice of articulating an educational organization's purpose has been around virtually since public education was established. In fact, most school boards have in their archives several drafts of philosophy statements or charters that describe the purpose of their school divisions dating back several years, if not decades. (As described previously, a statement which posits the purpose of public education in Virginia dates back to Thomas Jefferson--two centuries ago!) Nevertheless, the adoption of strategic planning during the past few decades has caused many school divisions to dust off older documents and reconsider the changing role of public

education as the new millennium approaches. One result is a profusion of newly created mission statements, which constitute streamlined statements of purpose for individual schools and school divisions.

These new mission statements have potentially taken many forms, ranging from a single phrase or slogan to one or more pages of explicitly stated doctrine (Below et al., 1987; Lewis, 1987; McQuade & Champagne, 1995; Palmer, 1992). Undoubtedly, though, most mission statements favor the former--being "usually short and easily remembered,...not long, detailed outlines of goals and objectives" (NASSP, 1987, p. 9). No matter what the form, however, a mission statement sets the broad, overall direction of an educational organization, and, as such, it is the highest level of articulated policy of an organization from which all other functions should derive (Cook, 1990; Kaufman, 1972; Kaufman & Zahn, 1993; McCune, 1986; McQuade & Champagne, 1995; NASSP, 1987; et al.).

Studies of Mission Statements in Education

As described above, mission statements have a theoretically-established role in educational planning. But what is known of the practical use of mission statements in the field? A review of ERIC documents and educational journals indicates that mission statements--usually as a cornerstone of strategic planning--have inundated educational planning in the field (Conley, 1992). Published reviews, presentations, and reports of actual long-range and strategic plans from K-12 schools and school divisions and from institutions of higher education characteristically devote considerable narrative to the development and use of mission statements. Therefore, mission statements are present in educational

institutions, and educational administrators are developing and using them for purposes of planning for and operating their institutions (Lundquist & Rice, 1991; Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91; Rusch, 1992; Sizer, 1992; Stott & Walker, 1992; et al.).

But are these mission statements developed and used as theory dictates, and—perhaps more important--what do these mission statements tell us about the purposes of our educational institutions? Far fewer studies address such questions. Indeed, studies devoted solely to—or even directly concerned with--the role or application of mission statements in educational planning are exceedingly rare. A review of research found only four such studies, and only two of the four were concerned with mission statements of K-12 educational institutions (Conley, 1993; Rusch, 1992). The other two focused on institutions of higher education (Lundquist & Rice, 1991; Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91).

The rarity of studies of mission statements in education suggests that although mission statements are a critical component of educational planning in theory, we have very little confirmed understanding of their use in practice. Therefore, the study of mission statements in educational planning has been exploratory in nature. According to Borg and Gall (1989), exploratory studies “tend not to be guided by hypotheses, because the researcher does not have sufficient understanding of the phenomena to form conjectures about relationships between constructs....Exploratory research tends to study many variables and their relationships in order to further understanding of the phenomena” (p. 32). Studies by Newsom and Hayes (1990-91), Lundquist and Rice (1991), Rusch (1992), and Conley (1993) qualify as exploratory studies according to Borg and Gall’s

definition, for these studies shed an initial light on the application of mission statements in the field of educational planning.

A Study of the "Worthwhileness" of Mission Statements in Higher Education

In 1990-91, Newsom and Hayes looked at the "worthwhileness" of mission statements in colleges and universities. Their study grew out of a concern that mission statements in higher education institutions "seemed to represent a compromise designed to offend no one and at best to limit a few options" (p. 28). By way of addressing this concern, they designed a study to determine if mission statements in colleges and universities truly served any purpose or if, as Phelan (1991) described, "Rather than providing a pragmatic guide for the future, mission statements simply adorn college catalogs and presidential offices" (p. 3).

Using a systematic sampling technique, Newsom and Hayes surveyed the presidents of 142 colleges and universities in 11 southeastern states. Of the institutions sampled, 90 were public institutions, 21 private, and 31 sectarian. After an initial letter and a follow-up letter two months later, 114 institutions (80 percent) replied to the questionnaire and request for a copy of the institution's mission statement. Of the institutions that responded, only 93 (65 percent) returned a mission statement. It is unclear why 15 percent of responding institutions did not return a mission statement--whether for lack of a mission statement, inaccessibility of the mission statement to the individual responding on behalf of the institution, or any other reason. Further follow up would have helped to clarify this.

Despite that particular concern, Newsom and Hayes' study provides an example of an effective method by which to study mission statements in educational settings. They adapted a framework originally developed by Pearce and David (cited in Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91) as an instrument for measuring the "worthwhileness" of the mission statements of Fortune 500 companies. The instrument was comprised of seven dimensions as adapted by Newsom and Hayes for the study of colleges and universities:

1. Target clientele--the constituencies that a college or university wants to have.
2. Products--the outputs beyond general teaching, research, and service that a college or university intends.
3. Geography--the specific location that a college or university serves.
4. Commitment--elements of the mission that will be emphasized to ensure the survival or growth of a college or university .
5. Philosophy--a college's or university's specific beliefs, values, and philosophical priorities.
6. Self definition--how a college or university views itself.
7. Public image--the reputation that a college or university has among the public.

(adapted from Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91)

From a survey of the sample, Newsom and Hayes found that 98 percent of the responding institutions of higher education have a mission statement (although only 65 percent actually submitted a copy of their mission statement to the researchers). Furthermore, using Pearce and David's seven dimensions of a worthwhile mission statement, Newsom and Hayes drew three conclusions about mission statements in higher education: (1) Compared to private and sectarian

institutions, public institutions are stronger in identifying the geographic area that they serve. (2) Private and sectarian institutions tend to fare better than public institutions across all other dimensions, with particular strengths in presenting a certain public image and in identifying a specific philosophy. (3) Regardless of the relative strengths of public, private, and sectarian colleges and universities, mission statements in higher education are, in general, "a waste of time" (p. 30).

Newsom and Hayes drew this final, damning conclusion by using the framework of seven dimensions of a worthwhile mission statement and finding that most of the mission statements that they analyzed were too broad and too generic because they lacked any clear conformity to the seven dimensions of their framework. Indeed, they found that "although the [mission] statement itself is regarded [by institutions] as essential, its content seems utterly unimportant" (p. 29). According to Newsom and Hayes, therefore, mission statements in higher education are not, in their present form, "worthwhile" or useful to the institutions that they were created to serve because the statements do not conform to the seven dimensions of a mission statement identified for organizations by Pearce and David.

A Study of the Mission Statements of Women's Studies Programs

A second study of mission statements also comes from the field of research in higher education. In 1991, Lundquist and Rice looked at the mission statements of women's colleges and coeducational colleges with women's studies programs. Their purpose was to determine whether there were significant similarities or differences between single-sex and coeducational colleges in the

content of their mission statements. Lundquist and Rice chose to study mission statements because, "The mission statement in a college catalog represents an embodiment of the institution's central goals and objectives" (pp. 10-11).

To conduct the study, Lundquist and Rice used the Women's College Coalition and the 1989 Women's Studies Program Directory to create a list of women's colleges and coeducational colleges offering baccalaureates or advanced degrees in women's studies. Since only 26 of the 76 women's colleges had women's studies programs, a comparison random sample of 26 coeducational institutions with women's studies programs and another comparison random sample of 26 women's colleges without women's studies programs were drawn. These samples were pared down to 23, 21, and 23, respectively, based on the presence of each institution's catalog in the University Microfiche Catalog Library.

Although the focus of the study was mission statements, Lundquist and Rice acknowledged that the term "mission statement" had to be interpreted broadly to mean any public statement of "mission, purpose, philosophy, goal, or objective" (p. 12). This was necessary because of a lack of consistency among institutions regarding the nomenclature of educational planning. Nevertheless, such statements which qualified, according to the researchers, as "mission statements" were obtained for 17 women's colleges and 13 coeducational colleges.

Similar to Newsom and Hayes (1990-91), Lundquist and Rice also employed content analysis as their method for studying mission statements. This was done in two ways. First, a simple frequency count of action verbs was taken;

second, the educational outcomes professed by each institution to be offered to students were listed and counted. The statements were reviewed by the researchers blindly (i.e., without knowledge of the institutions from which they came).

Lundquist and Rice reported their results in frequency count tables which compared the three types of institutions in the study. For example, they found that “provide” and “commit” were two verbs used most often by all three types of colleges, but that “develop” (a word, according to Lundquist and Rice, that suggests more involvement with students by the institution) was used 25 percent less by coeducational colleges. Regarding the qualities or benefits offered to students by the institution’s mission statement, “critical thinking” was most frequent among both coeducational (38.1 percent) and women’s colleges with women’s studies programs (43.5 percent). Among women’s colleges without women’s studies programs, “values clarification” was most frequently referred to in mission statements (52.2 percent). In addition to these findings, Lundquist and Rice included percentages for all of the descriptive action verbs and the qualities or benefits present in the mission statements that were analyzed.

From their content analysis of mission statements, Lundquist and Rice drew several conclusions. They concluded that the mission statements of women’s colleges were more action-oriented than those of coeducational colleges. They concluded that women’s colleges with women’s studies programs and coeducational colleges were more focused on academic and cognitive development of students than women’s colleges without women’s studies programs. They also concluded that all three types of colleges ultimately

emphasized the holistic development of students (i.e., personal, social, and intellectual development). Finally, though, Lundquist and Rice concluded that “the mission statements of women’s colleges are qualitatively different from those of coed institutions with women’s studies programs” (p. 16). Notably, the use of content analysis enabled Lundquist and Rice to determine the qualitative characteristics of the mission statements and to determine degrees of similarities and differences among them.

A Foucaultian Analysis of K-12 Division-level Mission Statements

A third study shed light on the use of mission statements in K-12 educational planning, although the analysis of mission statements was a subtopic of the larger study. In 1992, Rusch conducted a study in which she used the theories of French historian, philosopher, and literary critic Michel Foucault to deconstruct the language of strategic plans of American public school divisions. Her purpose was to look at “strategic planning as a discursive practice: a process of communication that restructures what we ‘know’ about schools and schooling” (p. 3).

According to Rusch, Foucault was concerned with how people dominate and subjugate each other and themselves, and his central thesis held that “people may know why they do what they do, but they don’t always pay attention to what, what they do does” (p. 9). Rusch studied division-level strategic plans to attempt to illuminate the unknown intentions and effects of strategic plans--what she termed “visible inconsistencies” in strategic plans. These inconsistencies, Rusch argued, are contained in the language of strategic plans, which are “textual

representations” that have the power to create “a new kind of reality for teachers and students” (p. 10). As such, strategic plans and the mission statements that guide them represent very real and very powerful means of wielding power in public education.

To collect the strategic plans of school divisions for her study, Rusch employed a network or “snowball” sampling method (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Plans were solicited using a mailing list of participating K-12 school divisions in an American Association of School Administrator’s training session on strategic planning facilitated by Bill Cook. An initial mailing to 200 participants resulted in 57 responses. A second request was sent to state-level school administrators in all 50 states. This request for referrals to divisions using strategic planning and a subsequent request of the referred school divisions garnered 60 additional strategic plans. Of the 117 strategic plans collected, Rusch studied 88 division-level plans from 32 states. She did not include in her study plans from individual schools, regional agencies, or professional groups. Her sample of 32 states represented all geographic areas of the United States. A survey and questionnaire were also collected from 87 of the 88 school divisions. Each strategic plan included belief statements, a mission statement, and some form of objectives and strategies.

Similar to Newsom and Hayes (1990-91) and Lundquist and Rice (1991), Rusch employed content analysis as her methodology for studying the mission statements of the 88 school divisions in her study. (Note that although Rusch studied the mission statements, belief statements, objectives, and strategies of the strategic plans, the present review of Rusch’s study focuses solely on her analysis

of mission statements.) Rusch used the first 57 mission statements to identify emergent categories, which she identified as values, social traditions, and schooling. (Emergent categories are groupings or core themes that are identified through an analysis of language data, but which are not identifiable prior to that analysis.) The category “values” included such concepts as individual rights, self-esteem, quality education, and lifelong learning; “social traditions” included excellence, democracy, citizenship, community, careers, and the global society; and “schooling” included concepts of curriculum, instruction, students, and teaching. These categories were then used to analyze all 88 mission statements. For purposes of comparison, simple frequency percentages were presented.

From her content analysis, Rusch concluded that there was an imbalance toward values and social traditions in the mission statements. She found 39.2 percent and 43.9 percent, respectively, of all mission statements included language related to values and social traditions; however, only 16.7 percent contained references to concepts represented by Rusch’s schooling category. In light of Foucault’s theory of the human use of discursive power, Rusch concluded that the typical division-level mission statement represents an attempt at “reconciling and harmonizing personal and political conflicts more than it is an activity for improving the schooling of children” (p. 17).

As described previously, Rusch also studied the content of the belief statements, objectives, and strategies of strategic plans using content analysis; however, her methods, data, and conclusions regarding mission statements are most relevant to the present study. Specifically, Rusch’s study further validates (along with Newsom and Hayes [1990-91] and Lundquist and Rice[1992]) the use

of content analysis as a method for studying mission statements. Her study also suggests that there is evidence of de facto consensus among school divisions regarding the purpose of public education. This idea is further supported by a second study of K-12 strategic plans, which also looked at the content of division-level mission statements.

An Exploratory Study of K-12 Division-level Mission Statements

In 1993, Conley presented an exploratory study whose purpose was to provide “insight into the application of strategic planning in American school districts” (p. 2). Such insight would “facilitate better understanding of [strategic planning’s] use...and provide a platform upon which further research on strategic planning in education may be conducted” (p.2). Similar to Rusch, Conley studied not only the mission statements of strategic plans, but also the belief statements, parameters, objectives, and strategies. Again, however, this review of the study focuses only on Conley’s analysis of the mission statements of public school divisions.

Conley, like Rusch, used a network sampling method to collect strategic plans for his study. He obtained a list of more than 400 individuals who had participated in strategic planning workshops conducted by the American Association of School Administrators and sent to them a request for a copy of their school division’s strategic plan. He also contacted state departments of education in all 50 states for referrals to divisions that used strategic planning, and requests were also sent to those school divisions. Conley collected 120 strategic plans, of which 79 were selected for analysis based on their compatibility with

paradigms of strategic planning established by Conley from a review of strategic planning theory.

The mission statements (as well as the other components of the plans) were studied using content analysis and quantitative analysis. According to Conley, "The intent was to discover basic patterns that existed within and between plan sections" (p. 9). Individual sections of the plans, such as the mission statements, were analyzed with the intent of determining specific, core themes. Quantitative analysis, in the form of simple frequency counts, was used to identify and compare trends among these core themes. Conley's research methodology was undertaken in the spirit of developing grounded theory, which is theory "developed from the data" (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 389). His use of content analysis and the development of grounded theory are consistent with the exploratory nature of his study.

Similar to Rusch, Conley found a number of emergent themes in the mission statements of public school divisions; however, whereas Rusch identified three broad themes, Conley identified 20 distinct themes. The themes included the following, which are listed in order of frequency from most frequent to least frequent:

continued on next page

1. responsible citizen
2. changing world
3. partnership
4. equity
5. lifelong learner
6. cultural diversity
7. global society
8. develop potential fully
9. excellence
10. self-sufficient
11. caring environment
12. positive self-esteem
13. comprehensive
14. character development
15. learning styles
16. higher-order thinking
17. competence
18. higher education prep.
19. employment training
20. literacy.

From the analysis that identified the 20 themes shared among 79 division-level mission statements, Conley posited three conclusions regarding mission statements. First, Conley asserted that there is a striking similarity of content among mission statements. Strong, recurring themes include responsible citizenship, the changing world, partnership, equity, and lifelong learning. Second, Conley found that the statements he studied “do not seem to be limiting or reducing the educational mission of the school district” (p. 25). In fact, the mission of public school divisions seems to be expanding. Third, Conley reasoned that although public education is in the midst of a trend toward decentralization, there seems to be little evidence of this at the level of division mission statements. Rather, Conley suggested the strong similarity in the content of mission statements among school divisions is evidence of a trend toward consensus as to the purpose of education.

Significance of the Previous Studies

The studies by Newsom and Hayes (1990-91), Lundquist and Rice (1992), Rusch (1992), and Conley (1993) provide several cornerstones to support the further research of mission statements in educational planning and administration. First and perhaps most important, each demonstrates that the study of mission statements is important because mission statements, as Rusch (1992) wrote, "carry explicit and implicit powers that can affect the actions of all school district participants" (p. 17). In other words, mission statements represent a valid and significant topic of educational research because mission statements can affect the stakeholders in educational organizations, as well as the purposes that educational organizations attempt to achieve for their stakeholders.

Second, the four studies also validate a methodology for conducting such research. Specifically, content analysis--which was used in each of the four studies--provides a means of studying, identifying, and categorizing core themes that emerge from a comparison of written mission statements. Although considered a qualitative methodology, content analysis is typically used in conjunction with quantitative analysis in the form frequency counts, thereby illuminating trends among the emergent categories and core themes that the qualitative analysis threshes out (Borg & Gall, 1989). Such was the methodology of these studies, and, given the relative novelty of the study of mission statements in education, the further use and development of content analysis methodology in this area of research is warranted.

Finally, as Conley (1993) suggested in his exploratory study, there is some evidence of de facto consensus among school divisions concerning the mission of

K-12 public education. As described previously in the introduction to the present study, school divisions in the United States represent (in theory, if not in practice) literally thousands of distinct centers of power in public education. However, despite the long history and the continuing prevalence of local control in public education, school divisions may in fact be more similar in their purposes among each other than one may initially expect. In other words, this belief in the autonomy of local school divisions may be more myth than fact. The search for further evidence of the existence of de facto consensus among school divisions is therefore the major objective of the present study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In the present study of de facto consensus among the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions, four research questions drove the study:

1. Do the mission statements of Virginia school divisions share certain content characteristics?
2. To what degrees (i.e., at what frequencies) are such content characteristics shared?
3. What content is not shared widely among the mission statements of Virginia school divisions?
4. What shared content among division-level mission statements is also shared with Virginia's state-level statement of mission, as articulated in the Virginia Constitution?

Operational Definitions

To facilitate the study of division-level mission statements, certain terms were operationally defined.

Mission statement: A clearly and concisely articulated expression of a school division's overall purpose, which may include references to stakeholders, desired outcomes, means of achieving desired ends, specific programs, degrees of quality, and other foci deemed essential to the school division's overall purpose. (Note: Lengthy statements of educational philosophy, lists of belief statements, or sets of organizational goals do not, by this definition, constitute mission statements. This was a change

from the original proposal for this study, and the rationale for this change is discussed later in this chapter.)

Content analysis: A research methodology for systematically analyzing and drawing inferences from the content of communication (in this study, mission statements).

De facto consensus: Unintentional, but nevertheless observable, agreement among the content of the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions.

Target Population

The population of this study was the entire membership of the Virginia public school system. As such, each of the school divisions in Virginia represented a distinct member of that population, and, together, these school divisions constituted the total target population of the study. Given that all of the members of the target population were both identifiable and accessible to the researcher, a sample population was not necessary. Instead, all school divisions in the population itself were studied.

Assumption

In order to conduct this study, one major assumption was made. It was assumed that all school divisions in Virginia have a mission statement or some other short, written statement of the division's purpose. The assumption seemed reasonable since Virginia school divisions are legally required "to revise, extend, and adopt biennially a divisionwide six-year improvement plan" (VDOE, 1992, p.

165). Mission statements, or other statements of the purpose of an organization, are cornerstones of such long-range, educational plans (Oliva, 1993; Ornstein & Hunkins, 1993). Thus, it was assumed that public school divisions in Virginia would have and would provide copies of their mission statements.

Data Gathering

The objective of the data gathering method was to obtain a copy of the mission statement of each public school division in Virginia. The Virginia Educational Directory (published annually by the Virginia Department of Education) and a mid-year supplement to it were used to identify the 132 school divisions that constitute the state's K-12 public education system. The primary means of data collection was a personalized letter to the superintendent of each school division in Virginia. The letter introduced the researcher and also described his affiliation with The College of William and Mary, the topic of research, and the reasons for interest in this topic. The letter also included a request for a copy of the division's mission statement and an offer to share the results directly with the respondent's school division upon completion of the study. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included in the letter for the respondent to return a copy of his or her division's mission statement. The letter also indicated a time within which to respond. (See Appendix A.)

In the event of non-respondents, a follow-up phone call was made. The researcher introduced himself and explained his affiliation with The College of William and Mary. Then the researcher explained the nature of the study, referred to his original attempt to obtain the division's mission statement, and requested a

copy of the statement, if available. The follow-up telephone calls resulted either in learning that a school division did not have a mission statement or in having a mission statement faxed or mailed by the school division to the researcher. Given that mission statements are public documents and relatively short in length by definition, the target population of all 132 school divisions in Virginia was represented in the study. In short, the data collection methods resulted in a one hundred percent response rate. Of the 132 school divisions in Virginia, all of them indicated that they had some statement of "mission, purpose, philosophy, goal, or objective" as referred to by Lundquist and Rice (1991, p. 12). Of those, 89 indicated that they had an actual mission statement (as defined by this study) and provided a copy of the statement for the study. Thus, 67 percent of the school divisions in Virginia have a mission statement, and these statements comprised the artifacts for the study.

Content Analysis Methodology

Given the precedent set by the studies of educational mission statements cited previously, the methodology for the present study of the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions was content analysis. Content analysis is, in short, a research methodology for systematically analyzing the content of communication (Borg & Gall, 1989). It is, therefore, an appropriate means of studying and comparing the content of the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions and, by design, analyzing the presence of de facto consensus regarding the purpose of public education in the state.

Although only four studies of mission statements in education have preceded the present study, the methodology of content analysis has an established basis in the social sciences that stretches back some one hundred years (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Content analysis has been used to study a wide array of topics in the social sciences, including propaganda, historical texts, human psychology, mass communications, political bias, racial prejudice, racial discourse, violence on television, and characteristics of speech according to gender (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1990).

Despite the broad spectrum of topics that they cover, these content analysis studies also share two certain and defining characteristics. First, documentable communication (whether written, oral, or even visual) is the artifact of analysis in such studies (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). Content analysis recognizes that "communication is a central aspect of social interaction" (Weber, 1990, p. 10); therefore, content analysis studies are concerned directly with the "text or transcripts of human communications" (Weber, 1990, p. 10). Given the focus of content analysis on communication, the second characteristic of content analysis studies is that inferences can be made "about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message" (Weber, 1990, p. 9). Thus, two fundamental characteristics of content analysis are (1) the study of communication documents and (2) the drawing of inferences from them.

More specifically in the previous four studies of mission statements in education, content analysis is the research vehicle by which mission statements were used to draw inferences about the value of educational mission statements themselves (Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91), the explicit organizational intents of

educational institutions (Lundquist & Rice, 1991), the unintentionally expressed organizational intents of educational institutions (Rusch, 1992), and the individual focus and possible patterns of de facto consensus among autonomous educational organizations (Conley, 1992). In each of these studies, mission statements were the artifacts of study, and inferences were made about the statements themselves and about the organizations that produced the statements. Content analysis is indeed a “multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating a broad spectrum of problems in which the content of communication serves as a basis of inference” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 55). It is, furthermore, a means of producing descriptive information, cross-validating research, testing hypotheses, and discovering meaning through an analysis of language used by a person, a group, or an organization (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Borg & Gall, 1989). Therefore, the design of the present study also was guided by the established methodology of content analysis.

Upon receiving the existing mission statements of Virginia’s school divisions, the methodology of content analysis was employed. The methodology was adopted from Weber (1990), who defined distinct steps for a content analysis study. For the present study, however, Weber’s steps were further informed by the Krippendorf (1980) and to lesser degree by Borg and Gall (1989), Cohen and Manion (1994), Crowl (1993), and Fraenkel and Wallen (1993). Weber asserted that the practice of developing a relatively unique methodology for each content analysis is sound, for “there is no simple right way to do content analysis. Instead, investigators must judge what methods are most appropriate for their substantive problems” (Weber, 1990, p. 13). The following describes the steps

taken in the implementation of the present study of the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus among division-level mission statements in Virginia.

According to Weber (1990), a content analysis study must rest upon a grounded foundation consisting of (1) research questions, (2) relevant theories, (3) previous studies, and (5) identified documents or texts to be analyzed. In the present study, the four research questions described previously drove the study, while a review (See Chapter 2.) of theoretical and research-based literature provided a foundation for these questions. Of course, the documents to be analyzed were identified as division-level mission statements. Thus, the first four steps of a content analysis as outlined by Weber were met in the present study. A discussion of five additional, sequential steps of the content analysis for the present study (as synthesized from Weber, Krippendorf, and others cited previously and in the following) is presented herein. The seven steps were (1) the determination of coding units, (2) the definition of screening categories, (3) determination of the roles of emergent categories, (4) test coding, and (5) computing frequencies. Two additional considerations also discussed below are (1) ensuring reliability and (2) ensuring validity.

Determination of Coding Unit

Following the identification of the texts to be analyzed, the researcher must determine the specific units of analysis that will be employed in a content analysis study. Weber (1990) described this step with the following: "A central idea in content analysis is that the many words of the text are classified into much fewer content categories" (p. 12). Krippendorf (1980) referred to this step as

unitizing, while Cohen and Manion (1994) described it as the process of determining “units of analysis” (p. 56). Regardless of the label, the content analysis researcher must define the units that he or she will use to code the texts being analyzed. Weber delineated six possible content analysis units from which a researcher can select:

1. Word--the literal meanings only of each single word.
2. Word sense--the multiple possible meanings of words, proper nouns, idioms, phrases, or clauses.
3. Sentence--the intent or meaning of a whole sentence, but not of its individual components.
4. Theme--a unit of text which must include no more than one subject, predicate, and object and is often shorter than a sentence.
5. Paragraph--the intent or meaning of a whole paragraph, but not of its component parts. (This allows for the coding of large texts, but is less reliable than smaller coding units.)
6. Whole text--the intent or meaning of an entire text, but not of its component parts. (This also allows for the coding of large texts, but it too is less reliable.)

(adapted from Weber, 1990, pp. 20-23)

Considering that mission statements are by definition short in length yet broad in meaning, the unit deemed most appropriate for the present study was the theme. Analysis of single words alone would have been too limiting in analyzing meaning. The analysis of word sense would have been more fitting, but, as a unit, it alone would not account for complex interconnections of broad ideas characteristic of mission statements. The sentence, the paragraph, and the whole text were, of course, dismissed as possible units of analysis because the usual

short length of mission statements precludes their practicality. Therefore, the mission statements in the study were analyzed thematically, wherein complex ideas related in grammatical units no longer than whole sentences and no smaller than individual words were the objects of analysis.

Definition of Screening Categories

The objective of content analysis is to employ a coding system to analyze objectively and to categorize the language of the selected artifacts (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Borg & Gall, 1989). In order to facilitate and refine the use of themes as the unit of analysis in the present study, an initial set of categories was developed. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993), "This is the nub of document analysis--defining as precisely as possible those aspects of a document's contents that the researcher wants to investigate and then formulating relevant categories that are...explicit" (p. 389). Categories are defined sets of rules by which the units of analysis (i.e., themes in the present study) can be distinguished by their content.

One principle of establishing categories is that the characteristics of the documents to be analyzed actually contribute to the determination of the categories (Cohen & Manion, 1994). In the present study, the documents of analysis were mission statements; therefore, certain theoretically established components of mission statements predetermined certain content categories. For instance, stakeholders (i.e., groups and individuals with vested interests in the success of a school division) are characteristically mentioned in mission statements; thus, language that identifies the stakeholders in a school division

constituted a content category in the study. Other categories were determined based on the precedent of prior studies of mission statements in which content categories were also used. Five content categories were set and used for the content analysis of Virginia's mission statements, and they were as follows:

Category 1: Language that identifies the stakeholders in a division (Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91).

Category 2: Language that expresses outcomes or benefits that a school division promises for stakeholders, including students (Lundquist & Rice, 1991).

Category 3: Action verbs or expressions of how certain outcomes, programs, etc., will be provided by a school division (Lundquist & Rice, 1991).

Category 4: Language that identifies particular programs or initiatives of a school division (Lundquist & Rice, 1991).

Category 5: Adjectives, adverbs, and other expressions of quality or degree.

In addition to setting categories, a content analysis researcher must also determine the exclusivity of the categories (Weber, 1990). The issue of exclusivity refers to whether content can cross over between different categories, or if instances of language must be categorized in one and only one category each. According to Weber (1990), the researcher may choose either method by which to conduct a content analysis depending upon the purposes of the study. In the present study, the need to compute frequencies in order to compare degrees of consensus between content constituted the need to set the methodological rule that categories in the study would be exclusive. However, given the referent nature of language, it was understood prior to analysis that a limited number of words and

word senses would actually be entered in more than one category in order to facilitate comprehension of complex meanings of thematic units during the analysis process. Nevertheless, the thematic units themselves were exclusive within the respective categories.

The Roles of Emergent Categories

Another element of content analysis categories concerns the relative broadness of categories. Again, Weber (1990) contended that how broad or how narrow the categories for analysis are depends upon the purposes of the study. In the present study, one central purpose was to illuminate characteristics of de facto consensus among mission statements. In other words, the content analysis was actually to bring to light previously undetermined categories. This is, indeed, one of the central purposes of many content analysis studies: to identify emergent categories.

Emergent categories are groupings or core themes of content that are identified through an analysis of language data, but which are not identifiable prior to that analysis. Therefore, the content categories that were predetermined and which guided the initial analysis of the mission statements were relatively narrow in their definition. The content that was not able to be classified into one of the set categories then became the raw data for determination of emergent categories. Analysis was not limited to the five categories defined above, for content analysis methodology allows that other categories, groupings, or themes may emerge from the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Borg & Gall, 1989). Emergent categories therefore constituted the final data group in the study.

In addition to serving as a sixth screening category, emergent categories were also used to conduct the sub-analysis of each of the initial screening categories. The purpose of this crucial step was to make the content analysis as explicit as possible in its identification of shared content among the mission statements. After analyzing and classifying each mission statement into the initial screening categories, each category was then further analyzed in order to identify emergent categories within each classification. This sub-analysis permitted the identification of the specific stakeholders, outcomes, processes, programs, and other characteristics that were shared among the content of Virginia's division-level mission statements. At this step, word sense (Weber, 1990) was used as the unit of analysis, for the language data were already categorized by single words and short word combinations. Therefore, classifying the data was basically a matter of matching words or word combinations to similar ones. In this way, specific emergent categories within each initial screening category were identified, and more explicit understandings of the characteristics of shared content were brought to light.

Test Coding

According to Weber (1990), "The best test of the clarity of category definitions is to code a small sample of the text. Testing not only reveals ambiguities in the rules, but also leads to insights suggesting revisions of the classification scheme" (p. 23). Thus, twenty mission statements (approximately 15 percent of the target population) were test coded using the six initial categories. The mission statements were read, reviewed, and analyzed, and the

content was categorized into one of the six predetermined categories in thematic units no smaller than a single word and no larger than an independent clause. This test coding process found that Categories 1-4 and Category 6 (emergent categories) reaped considerable data, but Category 5 (adjectives, adverbs, and other expressions of quality or degree) did not represent a meaningful category in and of itself. Instead, such modifiers were more meaningfully categorized with the nouns and verbs that they modified instead of in isolation. Therefore, the original "Category 5" was dropped as an exclusive content category in the study. Instead, "Category 5" became the heading for the analysis of emergent categories.

With five categories determined for the content analysis, all of the mission statements were then analyzed according to the refined design. All of the words in each of the mission statements were accounted for in the analysis, the only exceptions being non-substantive linking verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions. Tables representing the analysis are presented in Chapter 4 of the present study, and transcriptions of the full mission statements are in Appendix B. (Note, the names of the school divisions were omitted during analysis to increase the reliability and objectivity of the analysis, and the names are omitted in the appendix in accord with the conditions presented to superintendents in the original letter of request.)

Computing Frequencies

Following the thematic analysis and categorization of the content of the mission statements to determine the characteristics of the content, data were further analyzed to determine the degrees of consensus among the content (Borg

& Gall, 1989; Crowl, 1993). According to Weber (1990), the computation of frequencies is used in content analysis to “create quantitative indicators that assess the degree of attention or concern devoted to cultural units such as themes, categories, or issues” (p. 70). Weber (1990) also points out that “counting assumes that higher relative counts (proportions, percentages, or ranks) reflect higher concern with the category” (p. 56). Hence, whereas the use of categories enabled the analysis of the characteristics of consensus, the computation of frequencies permitted the analysis of the degrees of consensus.

Following Borg and Gall (1989), both absolute and relative frequencies were computed. Absolute frequencies consisted of the number of cases in which certain categories are reflected in the mission statements of Virginia’s public school divisions. Relative frequencies were the proportion (or percentage) of such occurrences related to the total number of categories. In addition, chi square (χ^2) analysis was used to determine the significance of the frequencies of the content identified through the content analysis (Borg & Gall, 1989; Gay, 1987; Kiess, 1989).

Reliability of the Methodology

As with any methodology, the reliability of a content analysis study must be evaluated and reported (Borg & Gall, 1989; Weber, 1990). According to Weber (1990), there are several means of ensuring the reliability of a content analysis, including stability, reproducibility, and accuracy. Stability is “the extent to which results of content classification are invariant over time” (Weber, 1990, p. 17). Although he couches his discussion of stability in terms of time, Weber also

argued that stability is related to the length of the documents being analyzed. Specifically, stability of analysis is inversely related to the length of the documents being analyzed. In other words, the shorter the documents, the greater the stability; the longer the documents, the lesser the stability. Given that mission statements are, by definition, very short in length (typically just a single sentence long), reliability in the form of stability was high in the present study.

A second form of reliability in a content analysis is reproducibility. Reproducibility is essentially inter-rater reliability (Weber, 1990). As with other methodologies, content analysis is more reliable when multiple researchers who are analyzing the same data end up with the same results (Borg & Gall, 1989). In the present study, however, only one researcher was available to conduct the analysis. Nevertheless, a degree of reproducibility was achieved during the test coding procedures described previously. During that stage of the study, the test coding of 20 mission statements was presented to the researcher's advisor, who concurred with the results of this initial categorization. Thus, reproducibility was in evidence.

The third form of reliability described by Weber (1990) is accuracy. Accuracy is the extent to which classification of content in categories conforms to a set standard. This is the strongest form of reliability according to Weber (1990), but it is seldom used because standard categories are infrequently established independently of a research project. In the present study, the four predetermined categories of analysis were established in previous research studies (Lundquist & Rice, 1991; Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91). Although reflective of exploratory

studies, these categories constitute an evolving standard. Thus, accuracy, the strongest form of reliability, was also ensured to a degree in the present study.

Validity of the Methodology

As with reliability, so must the validity of a content analysis be evaluated and reported (Borg & Gall, 1989). According to Weber (1990), there are several means of ensuring the validity of the methodology, and the following means were employed in the present study.

One problem to overcome in content analysis is the problem of the validity of the content categories. To help ensure validity, it is first of all important to establish categories and “clear and detailed coding rules for each category” (Weber, 1990, p. 16) prior to the analysis, if at all possible (Krippendorf, 1980). Obviously, in purely exploratory studies where only emergent categories can be sought, this is not possible. In the present study of Virginia’s division-level mission statements, however, five categories (Please see “Definition of Screening Categories” above.) were predetermined from previous studies of mission statements in education. Predetermination of categories provides the rules for inferences that are drawn from content analysis. When such rules are set in advance of the study, valid results can be better ensured, for one can look at the results and see if they are reflective of the established categories (Weber, 1990).

Another means of ensuring the validity of a content analysis study is to establish a correspondence between the categorical definitions and the construct that the categories are used to analyze. Weber referred to this as hypothesis validity; however, it is perhaps more commonly referred to as construct validity

(Borg & Gall, 1989). In regard to construct validity, one must ask in the present study whether the content categories are representative of the established theory concerning mission statements in education? More specifically, does the literature support the contentions that mission statements in education typically contain content related to (1) stakeholders, (2) outcomes, (3) expressions of action or how outcomes, programs, etc., will be provided, and (4) particular programs or initiatives of the organization? The answers to these questions are affirmative. These categories were established through the precedent of previous studies of mission statements in education. (Please see Chapter 2.) Thus, the content categories in the study contributed to the validity of the study itself.

Weber (1990) also contended that the validity of a content analysis can be increased by establishing semantic validity. Semantic validity “exists when persons familiar with the language and texts examine lists of words (or other units) placed in the same category and agree that these words have similar meanings or connotations” (Weber, 1990, p. 20).

Semantic validity is definitively similar to reproducibility, a form of reliability discussed previously. The difference between the two is found in the purpose of each. Reproducibility ensures that language data are consistently and similarly classified in established categories. In other words, the categories are employed reliably by the researcher, and the researcher does not confound the data. Semantic validity also ensures that language data are consistently and similarly classified in established categories; however, in regard to validity, the categories must not confound the data. One way of testing for semantic validity is to conduct a test coding of a sample of the data and then have a second researcher

review the analysis. In the present study, the researcher's advisor reviewed and concurred with the classification of data for 20 mission statements. As with questions of reliability, the confirmation of the test coding by another researcher contributed to the study's validity.

A second way of increasing semantic validity in a content analysis is to restrict categories and not allow placement of units in multiple categories (Weber, 1990). This criterion was met in the present study by making each category mutually exclusive. Data were classified into only a single category each, thereby contributing to the validity of the study.

Finally, a third means of maximizing semantic validity is to compare documents of similar length (Weber, 1990). In documents of widely varying lengths (e.g., one sentence versus several paragraphs) units of analysis are likely to occur at greater frequencies in the longer texts, thereby detracting from the validity of the frequency counts. In the original design of this study, traditional mission statements were to be compared with any public statement of "mission, purpose, philosophy, goal, or objective" (Lundquist & Rice, 1991, p. 12). This was the original design because the actual prevalence of true mission statements in Virginia was unknown; however, as mission statements were collected from school divisions, it became apparent that a majority of Virginia's school divisions (67 percent) have mission statements, per the definition from the literature and used in the present study. Under the original design of the study, semantic validity would have been diminished because of the comparison of documents of widely varying lengths. However, the modification to analyzing only true mission

statements helped to maximize semantic validity through the comparison of documents of similar length.

Limitations of the Study

Extensive steps were taken to design a study intent only on answering the research questions; therefore, in order to conform to content analysis methodology, to ensure reliability, and to maximize validity, several limitations of the study need be identified.

First, the purpose of the study was to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus among public school division mission statements in Virginia; therefore, the study did not seek to investigate how mission statements are actually employed by school divisions or what effect mission statements have on specific educational outcomes. Given the purpose of the proposed study, no effort was made to address the utility of mission statements (i.e., the understanding of a mission statement by stakeholders, the representativeness of a constituencies' beliefs, or the significance concerning specific components of an educational program). Nor did the study question the sources of mission statements. Thus, the study was concerned only with collecting and analyzing at face-value the content of mission statements supplied by Virginia's school divisions.

A second limitation to the present study was also encountered and expressed well by Lundquist and Rice (1991) who employed content analysis in their study of college mission statements. They wrote, "Extreme caution must be exerted in inferring environment effects from the idealistic goals of mission

statements” (p. 17). In other words, it cannot be assumed that mission statements are absolute or true reflections of what a school division actually provides students and other stakeholders. Rusch (1992) reiterated this point in her use of content analysis in her study of strategic plans and mission statements. Thus, it is understood that the content analysis of mission statements is a means of producing descriptive data regarding the expressed purposes of public education, but is not necessarily reflective of actual outcomes.

A third limitation of the study was related directly to content analysis methodology. According to Manning and Cullum-Swan (1994), “Content analysis has been unable to capture the context within which a written text has meaning” (p. 464). This limitation applies to this and all content analysis studies. In short, the methodology cannot sufficiently account for the context or environment in which a mission statement was written, adopted, or used—at least not based solely on the documents being analyzed. Critics of content analysis would make much of this limitation, but proponents of the methodology offer some insight to it. Krippendorf (1980), for example, explains that written language is symbolic communication, and symbolic communication is vicarious by nature. That is, symbolic communication is intended to enable a reader to make specific inferences based on the symbols and their meaning outside of the immediate context of the sender. Therefore, although a lack of understanding about context is indeed a limitation to the content analysis of written documents such as mission statements, it is also a definitive characteristic of the very nature of all written communication. It is, in a sense, unavoidable; still, it is important to acknowledge as a potential limitation.

Ethical Safeguards and Considerations

As described above, the vicarious nature of written communication has a potentially limiting effect on a content analysis study. It also, however, serves as a natural safeguard. Krippendorff (1980) explains that the content analyst works with language data unobtrusively by gathering documents and categorizing the content. Neither the documents nor the receivers or senders of the documents are changed in any way as a result of the content analysis process. A content analysis study does not directly or indirectly change reality through influence, suggestion, or other means (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993; Krippendorff, 1980; Weber, 1990). In this way, the target population is safeguarded. Another safeguard inherent in the design of this study was that mission statements of public school divisions are by law and by design available to the general public. Therefore, any incidental dissemination of the mission statements of Virginia's school divisions that either has or may result from this study would not pose ethical concerns. Third, given that the study was exploratory in nature and in design, no interventions or treatments were necessary. Thus, no precautions or protections were needed for the participating school divisions or their representatives. Finally, the proposal for the study was reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Committee for the School of Education at The College of William and Mary, the institution affiliated with the present study.

Chapter 4: Results

The two primary purposes of this study were (1) to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus among school divisions in Virginia concerning the purpose of K-12 public education in the state as articulated in division-level mission statements and (2) to determine the characteristics of consensus between division-level mission statements and the mission of K-12 public education as articulated in the Virginia Constitution. To this end, the study was designed around the following four research questions:

1. Do the mission statements of Virginia school divisions share certain content characteristics?
2. To what degrees (i.e., at what frequencies) are such content characteristics shared?
3. What content is not shared widely among the mission statements of Virginia school divisions?
4. What shared content among division-level mission statements is also shared with Virginia's state-level statement of mission, as articulated in the Virginia Constitution?

Given these research questions, the research methodology of content analysis was employed, and a data collection strategy was developed and undertaken. The results are presented herein.

Results of the Data Collection

The letters of request and follow-up telephone calls to Virginia's 132 public school divisions yielded a 100 percent response rate; the entire target population was represented in the study.

Out of the 132 public school divisions in Virginia, 88 indicated that they had a mission statement and provided a copy for the study. Thus, 67 percent, or two-thirds, of all public school divisions in Virginia had a mission statement at the time of the study. In addition, one school division indicated that it indeed had a mission statement but that the mission statement was under revision and was therefore unavailable.

On the other hand, 43 school divisions indicated that they did not have a division-level mission statement. This represented 33 percent, or one-third, of the school divisions in Virginia. These school divisions did, however, indicate that they had statements of educational philosophy, organizational goals or objectives, organizational by-laws, vision statements, or, in one case, organizational themes.

Table 1 indicates the frequency and percentage of Virginia public school divisions that either had or did not have a mission statement. Chi-square analysis indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the number of school divisions that had a mission statement and the number that did not. Given that a significant number of school divisions had mission statements, the decision to analyze mission statements alone was made. This resulted in a data group of 88 mission statements. (Recall that one mission statement was unavailable for inclusion in the study due to its being under revision.)

Table 1. Frequencies, Percentages and χ^2 Analysis of Division-level Mission Statements

	...had a mission statement.	...did not have a mission statement.	Total
Number of Virginia public school divisions that...	89	43	132
Percentage of Virginia public school divisions that...	67%	33%	100%

$$\chi^2_{\text{observed}} = 16.04; \chi^2_{\text{critical}(1)} = 3.84; \alpha = .05$$

It should be noted that the use of chi-square analysis in this study was limited. Chi-square analysis is a means of determining the statistical significance of certain nominal data, particularly nominal data represented by frequencies (Kiess, 1989). Where appropriate in the present study, chi-square analysis was used to lend credence to the significance already represented by frequencies and percentages. Notably, chi-square analysis was not appropriate in cases where content categories were not mutually exclusive. In such cases, only frequencies and percentages are presented.

Categorical Analysis of Mission Statements

With the data group established, the first three research questions were addressed simultaneously. Five initial content categories were identified to facilitate the analysis of the mission statements. (The process by which these categories were determined is describe in Chapters 2 and 3.) These categories were as follows:

Category 1: Language that identified the stakeholders in a division (Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91).

Category 2: Language that identified student outcomes or benefits that a school division promises for stakeholders, including students (Lundquist & Rice, 1991).

Category 3: Action verbs or expressions of how certain outcomes, programs, etc., would be ensured or provided through school division actions (Lundquist & Rice, 1991).

Category 4: Language that identified specific programs or initiatives of a school division (Lundquist & Rice, 1991).

Category 5: Language that identified emergent categories, i.e., previously unidentified categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Borg & Gall, 1989).

Table 2 shows the results of the initial analysis of the 88 division-level mission statements using the five screening categories. (Also see Appendix C.) All of the original language of the mission statements was analyzed and categorized into one of these five categories. The only language omitted from analysis included non-substantive linking and helping verbs (e.g., is and will be), conjunctions and articles (i.e., a, an, and the), references to school divisions' names, and introductory phrases akin to "The mission of the ___ school division is...."

Table 2. Categorical Analysis of Division Mission Statements

Frequency and percentage of Virginia division-level mission statements that contained language that identified..				
<u>Category 1</u> Stakeholders	<u>Category 2</u> Student Outcomes	<u>Category 3</u> Division Actions	<u>Category 4</u> Specific Programs	<u>Category 5</u> Emergent Categories
87	76	87	77	52
99%	86%	99%	77%	59%

The significantly high frequency of mission statements that contained language related to Categories 1 through 4 indicated that division-level mission statements in Virginia shared certain broad, theoretically-established content characteristics. (The role of Category 5 [Emergent Categories] is discussed later.) Specifically, nearly all Virginia public school division mission statements identified stakeholders (99 percent) and their own actions (99 percent) as component themes of their mission statements. In addition, most school divisions tended to identify student outcomes (86 percent) as part of their mission. Fewer school divisions referred to specific programs as being central to their mission (77 percent); nevertheless, more than three-quarters of the school divisions with mission statements did identify such programs. Hence, at the level of initial analysis of the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions, the following results were evident:

1. Virginia school divisions shared certain content characteristics, including language that identifies stakeholders, student outcomes, division actions, and specific programs.
2. These content characteristics were shared at very high frequencies among division mission statements.

Analysis of Emergent Categories

Regarding the third research question (What content is not shared widely among the mission statements of Virginia school divisions?), the analysis of emergent categories provided some initial insight. The emergent categories essentially represented language that did not fit into one of the four initial screening categories. (See Appendix H.) As described above, 52 out of the 88

mission statements included such language. Analysis of this language identified four distinct categories or themes:

- language that identified partnerships with parents and/or the community
- language that identified particular belief statements
- language that identified a view of society
- language that referred to the 21st century.

These four emergent categories were analyzed to determine the frequency with which they occurred. Table 3 illustrates the results of that analysis.

Table 3. Frequencies and Percentages of the Emergent Categories

Emergent Category			
Partnerships	Belief Statements	Views of Society	References to the 21st Century
34	17	21	5
39%	19%	24%	6%

These emergent categories provided some insight into content that is relatively unique to some of the mission statements. Most notably, references to the 21st century were present in some mission statements (five out of 88), but were quite rare (occurring in only six percent of all of the division mission statements). This may initially suggest a lack of forward thinking by educational administrators in the 83 school divisions that did not refer to the 21st century, especially considering the eminent approach of the new millennium. On the other hand, it may simply be that many of the mission statements were written five or more years ago--a time when public attention was less intent on the impending new century. In any case, a chi square analysis for $\alpha = .05$ and $\chi^2_{critical} (1) =$

3.84 found that references to the 21st century represent a significantly ($\chi^2_{\text{observed}} = 69.14$) novel theme among Virginia public school division mission statements.

A second relatively novel body of content was that of belief statements. Belief statements are expressions of certain assumptions about education, human worth, etc., upon which a mission statement is written (Kaufman, 1988; McCune, 1986). Strategic planning theory holds that belief statements are essential to, but not typically included in, mission statements (Kaufman, 1988; McCune, 1986). However, 17 of the 88 Virginia school divisions with a mission statement included some form of belief statement in their mission. Further analysis of the content of these belief statements yielded the following:

- 11% indicated a belief that all students can learn
- 3% indicated a belief that individuals are unique and have differing needs
- 2% indicated a belief that either schools or children are the gateway or hope for the future
- 2% indicated a belief that all students have a right to learn
- 2% indicated a belief that all individuals have worth
- 2% indicated a belief that teaching and learning are the most important components of schooling
- 1% indicated a belief that the success of children depends on the school division
- 1% indicated a belief that schools improve both collectively and one at a time.

It is evident from this analysis that most of the belief statements included within the division-level mission statements were relatively novel. (The most widely expressed belief [11 percent] was that all students can learn.) However,

the novelty of these belief statements is most likely less an indication of differences in beliefs among school divisions than it is the result of 17 school divisions deciding to break from the theoretical basis of mission statement development and include belief statements within their missions.

A third emergent category identified by the categorical analysis concerned differing views of society expressed by divisions within their mission statements. Nearly one quarter (24 percent) of school divisions with a mission statement referred to a particular view of society which it held. A chi-square analysis for $\alpha = .05$ and $\chi^2_{\text{critical}} [1] = 3.84$ indicated that a statistically significant ($\chi^2_{\text{observed}} = 24.05$) number of school divisions made reference to their view of society; thus, reference to a view of society was a relatively novel content characteristic of Virginia division-level mission statements. But, what were these views of society? Further analysis of the language discovered the following percentages and frequencies of various views of society:

- 11% identified a changing society
- 6% identified an interdependent or global society
- 5% identified a democratic society
- 2% identified a multicultural society
- 1% identified a challenging society
- 1% identified a technological society
- 1% identified a modern society.

Interestingly, the highest frequency among these views of society was the least substantive in content. The great majority of mission statements that indicated a particular view of society actually described it only as “changing.” The description begs the questions, Changing how? Why? Into what?

Unfortunately, given the nature of mission statements, no answers were forthcoming. Still, offering a view of society within the context of an educational mission statement represented a relatively novel body of content among Virginia public school division mission statements.

The final and most frequent emergent category was that of language that identified partnerships with the school division. More than one third (34 percent) of all school divisions referred to the role of partnerships in achieving the mission. A chi-square analysis for $\alpha = .05$ and $\chi^2_{\text{critical}[1]} = 3.84$ showed that this was a significantly few number of divisions that made such a reference ($\chi^2_{\text{observed}} = 4.54$). In short, references to partnerships within a division-level mission statement (along with referring to the 21st century, including belief statements, or positing a particular view of society) represented content not widely shared among the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions.

Alternately, as described initially in this analysis, Virginia's division-level mission statements did share certain categories of content, including language that identified stakeholders, language that identified student outcomes, language that identified division actions, and language that identified specific programs. The further analysis of these areas of shared content illuminated still other, more specific instances of shared and novel content.

Analysis of Stakeholders

The analysis of language that identified stakeholders focused on mention made of the groups served by and/or responsible for the successful functioning of

a school division. (See Appendix D.) Again, 99 percent of division-level mission statements identified one or more groups of stakeholders in the educational system. This is obviously a very highly significant shared content area among school division mission statements. But what stakeholders were identified? Content analysis found that four categories of stakeholders were present among the 88 division-level mission statements:

- students only
- students and parents
- students, parents, and the local community
- students, parents, the local community, and the larger community (e.g., the state, nation, or global community).

Table 4 illustrates the frequencies and percentages at which these stakeholder categories were present in mission statements, and it indicates the significance of these findings through chi-square analysis.

Table 4. Frequencies, Percentages, and χ^2 Analysis of Stakeholder Categories

No stakeholder identified	Stakeholder Category			
	students	students and parents	students, parents, and local community	students, parents, local community, and larger community
1	27	1	20	39
1%	31%	1%	23%	44%

$$\chi^2_{\text{observed}} = 34.89; \chi^2_{\text{critical}(3)} = 7.81; \alpha = .05$$

Statistically significant differences were present between the four stakeholder categories. Perhaps the most revealing differences, however, were illuminated when distinctions were made not between each of the four categories,

but when one juxtaposed the 31 percent of mission statements that identified students only as the stakeholders of education with the total of 68 percent that identified a combination of students and adults (in the form of parents, local community, and the larger community, in various combinations). For $\alpha = .05$ and $\chi^2_{critical}(1) = 3.84$, chi-square analysis indicated a significant difference between school divisions that identified students only as stakeholders and those that identified students and others as stakeholders in the success of the school division. More than twice as many school divisions as not indicated that the stakeholders of public education included students and various groups of adults. The implication was that the mission of public education stretches beyond (in some instances, far beyond) service to children alone.

Considering the groups of adults more specifically, only one school division viewed parents alone as the only adults with a stake in public education. By way of contrast, nearly one quarter (23 percent) of division-level mission statements indicated that the local community was the broadest scope of stakeholder in education--a finding which gives some weight to the historical assertion for local control of education. More prevalent, however, is the frequency with which local school divisions indicated that their mission served stakeholders beyond the local community. Nearly half of all mission statements in Virginia (44 percent) identified a larger community as a stakeholder in education. Specifically, only one school division identified the state as the highest level of stakeholder in public education, whereas 28 percent referred to the national or societal level as the highest and still 15 percent viewed the global society as the greatest scope of stakeholder in Virginia public

education. The implication is clear that a statistically significant proportion of Virginia school divisions believe that their local public education systems are in service not only of the local student population, but also to a community of people beyond the locality.

Analysis of Student Outcomes

The analysis of student outcomes focused on language that identified what outcomes or results would be achieved by and for students given their educational experience in a particular school division. Out of 88 division-level mission statements in Virginia, 76 contained language that identified student outcomes. Chi-square analysis of this fact ($\alpha = .05$ and $\chi^2_{\text{critical}} [1] = 3.84$) indicated that the presence of student outcomes in 86 percent of the mission statements was statistically significant ($\chi^2_{\text{critical}} = 46.54$). Thus, a significant majority of school divisions in Virginia shared a reference to student outcomes as a content characteristic of their mission statements.

The question followed, however: What student outcomes are identified by school divisions? Further analysis of language that identified student outcomes found that 22 student outcome categories were referred to by the 76 school divisions that included student outcomes in their mission statements. (See Appendix E.) The student outcome categories that emerged from the content analysis were the following, which are roughly grouped by theme:

continued on next page

1. Citizenship: contributes to betterment of society and/or world; socially responsible; social development
2. Ability to work with others: ability to work in groups; interpersonal skills
3. Respect for individual differences: awareness/appreciation of cultural diversity
4. Character: integrity; values
5. Positive self-esteem: positive outlook; happiness; personal fulfillment; mental health; emotional development
6. Habits of physical well-being: physical development
7. Family skills: provide/care for future family
8. Caring
9. Environmental stewardship: care for the physical world
10. Academic achievement: student learning; acquisition of certain/basic skills, knowledge, or behaviors; intellectual development
11. Communication: reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening skills
12. Mathematics: computational skills
13. Technology/technological skills
14. Preparedness for continuing education
15. Lifelong learning: enabled to learn in the present and the future
16. Economically productive: prepared for work/workforce
17. Preparedness for future challenges: able to succeed; competent; able to handle change
18. Fully developed potential
19. Decision-making
20. Problem-solving
21. Higher-order thinking: independent thinking; critical thinking
22. Creativity: artistic expression/appreciation.

Table 5 illustrates in ascending order the frequency and percentage at which each of these student outcomes were evident among the 88 division-level mission statements.

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Table 5. Frequencies and Percentages of Student Outcomes

Student Outcome	Frequency	Percentage
Caring	1	1%
Environmental stewardship	2	2%
Family skills	3	3%
Mathematics	3	3%
Decision making	3	3%
Technology/technological skills	4	5%
Problem solving	4	5%
Creativity	4	5%
Ability to work with others	5	6%
Communication	5	6%
Preparedness for continuing education	6	7%
Character	7	8%
Habits of physical well-being	9	10%
Respect for individual differences	10	11%
Higher-order thinking	12	14%
Fully-developed potential	15	17%
Positive self-esteem	16	18%
Academic achievement	27	31%
Lifelong learning	29	33%
Economically productive	31	35%
Preparedness for future challenges	32	36%
Citizenship	37	42%
<i>No student outcome identified</i>	12	14%

A review of Table 5 illuminated a three tiered range of frequencies among the student outcomes. First, there was a set of student outcomes of relatively low frequency, ranging from caring to character. Each of these student outcomes was evident in fewer than ten percent of all division-level mission statements in Virginia. Thus, those at the lowest end of this frequency range (i.e., caring, environmental stewardship, family skills, mathematics, and decision making—the lowest one-sixth in frequency) constituted areas of content that were not widely shared among school divisions. Moreover, caring constituted the only student outcome that was present in just one of the division-level mission statements, making it truly a unique student outcome among the statements.

A second set of student outcomes was distinguished by the range of ten to roughly 20 percent. This middle tier included habits of physical well-being, respect for individual differences, higher-order thinking, fully-developed potential, and positive self-esteem. These student outcomes were relatively common among school divisions, though less so than the third and highest frequency tier. Consisting of academic achievement, lifelong learning, economically productive, preparedness for future challenges, and citizenship, this set of student outcomes was present in nearly one-third to nearly one-half of all Virginia division-level mission statements. Therefore, these five student outcomes were the most widely shared content characteristics of student outcomes among the mission statements, and the student outcome citizenship represented an even more distinctive unit as the single most common identified outcome of among all Virginia mission statements.

Analysis of Division Actions

The analysis of division actions focused on action verbs and other language that expressed specific actions undertaken by school divisions in fulfillment of their missions. (See Appendix E.) The initial content analysis of this category found that 99 percent of all division-level mission statements in Virginia (87 out of 88) included such language. Of course, this is a highly significant percentage and clearly indicated that the inclusion of language identifying division-level actions was a widely shared content characteristic among Virginia mission statements.

Closer analysis of the language identifying division actions indicated that 75 different actions were specifically mentioned in the mission statements. Table 6 shows each division action in ascending order of the frequency and percentage at which each occurred.

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Table 6. Frequencies and Percentages of Division Actions

Division Action	Frequency	Percentage	Division Action	Frequency	Percentage
Acknowledge	1	1%	Empower	3	3%
Advance	1	1%	Enable	3	3%
Assure	1	1%	Establish	2	3%
Be responsible	1	1%	Evaluate	2	3%
Care	1	1%	Expect	2	3%
Engage	1	1%	Instill	2	3%
Enlist	1	1%	Involve	3	3%
Enrich	1	1%	Maximize	3	3%
Exceed	1	1%	Produce	2	3%
Fund	1	1%	Respond	2	3%
Give attention	1	1%	Share	2	3%
Graduate	1	1%	Stimulate	3	3%
Guide	1	1%	Support	2	3%
Impart	1	1%	Sustain	2	3%
Implement	1	1%	Treat	3	3%
Increase	1	1%	Work together	2	3%
Instruct	1	1%	Be accountable	4	5%
Keep pace	1	1%	Develop	4	5%
Motivate	1	1%	Improve	4	5%
Offer	1	1%	Maintain	4	5%
Operate	1	1%	Pledge	4	5%
Recruit	1	1%	Recognize	4	5%
Require	1	1%	Achieve	5	6%
Respect	1	1%	Nurture	5	6%
Retain	1	1%	Serve	5	6%
Revise	1	1%	Teach	5	6%
Secure	1	1%	Create	6	7%
Seek	1	1%	Educate	6	7%
Uphold	1	1%	Strive	6	7%
Use	1	1%	Commit	8	9%
Value	1	1%	Promote	8	9%
Work	1	1%	Encourage	7	10%
Assist	2	3%	Meet	7	10%
Communicate	3	3%	Foster	10	12%
Continue	2	3%	Prepare	14	16%
Cultivate	2	3%	Ensure	15	17%
Demonstrate	2	3%	Provide	50	58%
Emphasize	3	3%			

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A review of Table 6 demonstrated that a very large majority of school divisions in Virginia expressed their actions in relatively unique or novel ways. In fact, out of 75 miscellaneous division actions, 32 of them were entirely unique to individual school divisions. Furthermore, a total of 72 of them (96 percent) were included in 10 or fewer of the 87 mission statements that identified division actions in their mission statements. Thus, the particular actions expressed by divisions in their mission statements were content not widely shared. The only notable exceptions to this finding were the actions foster, prepare, ensure, and provide, each of which is present in 12 or more percent of all mission statements. Of course, most notably common among all mission statements was the action to provide, which was present in well over half (58 percent) of all division-level mission statements in Virginia.

Although the word-by-word analysis was helpful in terms of identifying specific, shared content among mission statements, an analysis of sets of synonymous words was conducted in hopes of gaining further insight. To perform this analysis, the individual action words from the mission statements were grouped into 29 sets of synonyms and further arranged by five general themes for sake of convenience, as follows:

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Degrees of Achievement/Commitment

1. Achieve/Meet
2. Demonstrate
3. Acknowledge/Recognize/Give attention/Value
4. Promote/Advance/Emphasize
5. Expect/Require/Uphold
6. Improve/Increase/Enrich/ Exceed/Maximize
7. Strive/Seek
8. Assure/Ensure
9. Commit/Pledge
10. Be accountable/Be responsible

Systems and Programs

11. Create/Develop/Establish
12. Operate/Use/Implement/Work
13. Provide/Offer
14. Maintain/Sustain/Support/ Secure/Continue/ Retain/Fund
15. Respond/Keep pace
16. Evaluate
17. Revise

Means of Educating

18. Serve
19. Assist/Guide
20. Nurture/Cultivate/Foster/Care
21. Encourage/Motivate/Stimulate/ Engage
22. Teach/Educate/Instruct/Impart/ Instill

Outcomes of Educating

23. Empower/Enable
24. Prepare
25. Produce/Graduate

Working in Cooperation

26. Communicate
27. Involve/Enlist/Recruit
28. Share/Work together
29. Respect/Treat

Appendix F shows an analysis chart of the 29 synonym sets and the five themes. The analysis of synonym sets fairly mirrored the previous analysis of individual actions. The most notable similarity was that the synonym set of provide/offer far outweighed other synonym sets, as it was present in 58 percent of the mission statements. The fundamental action of most Virginia school divisions with mission statements was apparently to “provide” something. The only other additional insight gained by the analysis of synonym sets was a relative expansion of actions shared among divisions. Foster and its synonyms nurture/cultivate/care was the second most prevalent action, present in 18 percent of all mission statements in Virginia. Closely predominant were the sets

assure/ensure and prepare, each present in 17 percent of the mission statements.

Several sets were also present in the ten-to-fifteen percent range, and they included the following in descending order:

- teach/educate/instruct/impart/instill
- achieve/meet
- commit/pledge
- maintain/sustain/support/secure/continue/retain/fund
- promote/advance/emphasize
- encourage/motivate/stimulate/engage
- improve/increase/enrich/exceed/maximize
- create/develop/establish.

Thus, although school divisions similarly described many actions that they would undertake, the most prevalent by far was that of providing/offering.

: Analysis of Specific Programs

The analysis of specific programs focused on language that identified particular programs, educational philosophies, educational policies, facilities/school environment issues, services/resources, staff, or administrative/managerial practices that a school division included as a component of its mission statement. Of the four initial screening categories, the specific programs category was the least widely shared among Virginia's division level mission statements. Nevertheless, out of 88 division-level mission statements in Virginia, fully 68 contained language that identified specific programs. Chi-square analysis of this ($\alpha = .05$ and $\chi^2_{\text{critical}} [1] = 3.84$) indicated that the presence of language related to specific programs in 77 percent

of the mission statements was statistically significant (χ^2 -critical = 26.18). Thus, language that identified specific programs was an area of shared content among Virginia division-level mission statements. (See Appendix G.)

Further analysis of the specific programs investigated the various forms that such programs took in the mission statements. Table 7 shows the seven categories that emerged from the language data in ascending order of the frequencies and percentages at which they occurred.

Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages of Specific Programs

Specific Program	Frequency	Percentage
Specific educational policies	6	7%
Administration and management	9	10%
Services or resources	11	14%
Staff	15	17%
Educational philosophies	27	31%
Facilities or school environment	35	40%
General educational programs	55	63%

Of the 88 public school divisions in Virginia with a mission statement, nearly two-thirds (63 percent) included some reference to general educational programs as a component of their mission. Second most predominant were references to the facilities or school environment (40 percent), and the third most widely shared reference was to specific educational philosophies (30 percent). Furthermore, given that the least widely shared language (the specific educational policies category) was common to seven percent of the mission statements in Virginia, there was no unique content regarding specific programs. Although the analysis of language by these themes was insightful, an analysis of more particular language also was illuminating of the content of mission statements.

With regard to the category that identified “general educational programs,” an emergent category was the predominance of references to the excellence or high quality of the programs offered. Of all 88 Virginia school divisions with a mission statement, 27 percent referred to the high quality or excellence of their educational/instructional programs and opportunities. Thus, more than one quarter of Virginia school divisions with a mission statement articulated the purpose of meeting the very highest of educational standards.

As Table 7 shows, nearly half of all Virginia mission statements contained language that identified facilities or school environment as part of their mission. More particularly, seven percent made references to facilities, and half of those references included reference to facilities being “well-maintained.” Regarding school environment or climate, 33 percent made such a references. Only five percent referred to the school environment in general. Specific references to environment included the following:

- 18% of all mission statements referred to a safe, orderly, or disciplined environment
- 10% referred to a learning environment
- 9% referred to a nurturing or caring environment
- 2% referred to a positive environment
- 2% referred to a success-oriented environment
- 2% referred to a respectful environment
- 2% referred to a challenging environment
- 2% referred to a inviting environment
- 1% referred to a personalized environment
- 1% referred to a dynamic environment.

It is perhaps a sign of the times that the number of references to a safe, orderly environment nearly doubled the number of references to providing a learning environment.

The third most frequent category of specific programs was that which contained references regarding particular educational philosophies articulated by school divisions in their mission statements. Of the divisions with mission statements, 15 percent of them referred to the ideal that their educational system was based upon meeting the individual needs of children. Some six percent of school divisions with mission statements referred to the importance of ensuring the well-being and growth of students. Other indications of educational philosophy included equity (five percent of mission statements), student self-responsibility (two percent), and reference to educating the whole child (one reference). The latter of these represented a unique reference among Virginia division-level mission statements.

References to staff were a far less frequent among school divisions, occurring in only 17 percent of all mission statements. The references that were made could all be categorized into one of the following five sets, each of which was representative of no more than six school divisions and no less than two:

- excellence of staff
- staff development
- importance of respect and recognition for staff
- providing fair compensation to staff
- ensuring good working conditions for staff.

Thus, staff issues had a relatively minor representation among Virginia division-level mission statements.

Another relatively minor category of references consisted of language that identified services or resources provided by a school division. Of all of the mission statements in Virginia, only nine percent referred to resources, services, structures, or equipment as a component of their mission. Two percent mentioned safe transportation specifically, and only one school division referred to technology as an essential component of their educational support for their mission.

Also minor among references to specific programs were those that addressed administrative and managerial practices. Such references were relatively few and far between:

- 5% referred to continual data analysis, a results-oriented approach, or measurable outcomes as a part of their mission
- 3% referred to ensuring cost-effectiveness
- 3% referred to providing educational leadership
- 2% referred to curriculum and instructional renewal
- 1% referred to efficient operations
- 1% referred to participatory decision making as part of the administrative structure
- 1% referred to having a customer-oriented focus.

Of these, the most frequent references were those that indicated a strategic planning approach to educational administration, specifically mentioning continual data analysis, a results-oriented approach, or measurable outcomes.

These references are not surprising since the development of a mission statement

is theoretically linked with strategic planning (Kaufman, 1988; McCune, 1986).

The other references in the above list represented, of course, unique or relatively novel statements of administrative practice among Virginia school divisions.

The final category of specific programs included references to actual educational practices or policies employed or identified as part of a school division's mission statement. Although the number of such references were few, the range of topics that they covered was quite broad:

- 2% identified the importance of the principal as the visionary leader of a school
- 2% identified the teacher as being professionally responsible for the achievement of his or her students
- 1% identified standards in core academic subjects
- 1% identified sufficient time on task as an essential component of its mission
- 1% identified a fair grading system as an essential component of its mission
- 1% identified a comprehensive curriculum with increasing diversity from elementary, to middle, and to high school as an essential component of its mission
- 1% identified tutorial services as an essential component of its mission
- 1% identified parent workshops as essential component of its mission.

It is evident from the above that a great deal of novelty was found among the school divisions in regard to specific educational practices that they might undertake as part of their mission. It is likely that such novelty is most indicative of local concerns and issues that were being focused on and addressed by individual school divisions.

The Question of Jefferson

The fourth and final research question addressed by the present study asked, What shared content among division-level mission statements was also shared with Virginia's state-level statement of mission, as articulated in the Virginia Constitution? As described in Chapter 1 of this study, Thomas Jefferson articulated the Commonwealth's purpose in establishing a public education system, and this statement has been reaffirmed and promoted by the Virginia legislature since then. Thus, the following serves as the Virginia's state-level mission statement:

Free government rests, as does all progress, upon the broadest possible diffusion of knowledge, and...the Commonwealth should avail itself of those talents which nature has sown so liberally among its people by assuring the opportunity for their fullest development by an effective system of education throughout the Commonwealth.

Thomas Jefferson, Article 1, § 15,
of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Virginia
(Virginia Department of Education, 1992, p. 7)

In order to conduct a comparison between the 88 division-level mission statements in Virginia and the state-level mission statement that is quoted above, a content analysis using the established guidelines of this study was undertaken on Jefferson's words. Table 8 shows an analysis of Jefferson's statement using the five initial screening categories that were used to analyze the division-level mission statements.

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Table 8. Categorical Analysis of State-level Mission Statement

<u>Category 1</u> Stakeholders	<u>Category 2</u> Student Outcomes	<u>Category 3</u> Division Actions	<u>Category 4</u> Specific Programs	<u>Category 5</u> Emergent Categories
Free government — Commonwealth — throughout the Commonwealth	the broadest possible diffusion of knowledge — their fullest development — [Free government] — [all progress]	by assuring — avail itself	the opportunity — effective system of education	Belief statements: all progress...[rests] upon... — those talents which nature has sown so liberally among its people View of society: Free government

Similar to the analysis of the division-level mission statements, the language of the state-level mission statement could be categorized by the five initially established categories. Therefore, the division-level mission statements and the state-level mission statement shared content related to stakeholders, student outcomes, division actions, specific programs, and the emergent category of belief statements. Next, the content of the language of the state-level mission statement was analyzed more closely for each of the five categories and compared to the results of the analysis of the 88 division-level mission statements.

Analysis of Stakeholders

Regarding stakeholders in public education, the state-level mission statement explicitly referred to the Commonwealth itself as a stakeholder. By way of contrast, only three percent of all the mission statements in Virginia specifically mentioned the state as a stakeholder in public education. Jefferson's language did, however, connote that stakeholdership in public education went

beyond the local community. In addition to referring to the Commonwealth, Jefferson also stated that “free government” relied upon public education. Given Jefferson’s role in the founding of the nation, one may confidently assume that his implication was that the nation itself also holds an important stake in the education of the public. Note, this does not suggest that the federal government has a role in implementing public education—recall that Jefferson omitted any such implication in the Preamble to the Constitution. Reference to the nation’s stakeholderhood in public education was apparently only as a benefactor. Fully 44 percent of all division-level mission statements made such implications as well; thus, there was some level of de facto consensus between the state-level and almost half of all division-level mission statements of Virginia that stakeholderhood in public education was held by the state and beyond. Nevertheless, 23 percent of the school divisions with mission statements suggested that stakeholderhood did not go beyond the local community, and another 31 percent implied that students themselves were the only true stakeholders in education. Hence, a de facto consensus of opinion throughout the state regarding who the stakeholders in public education are was not clearly evident.

Analysis of Student Outcomes

Student outcomes of public education were also a significant component of division-level mission statements, and they too were present in the state-level mission. One apparent reference in the state-level mission statement was to “the broadest possible diffusion of knowledge” as an outcome of education. This was

akin to the category identified among student outcomes of school divisions as academic achievement, which included student learning, acquisition of certain skills, knowledge, and behavior, and intellectual development. Nearly one-third of school divisions with a mission statement (31 percent) referred to this as an outcome of education; thus, there was a certain level of de facto consensus regarding this outcome between local school divisions and the state.

A second apparent but less formidable area of shared content was reflected in Jefferson's reference to "their fullest development." Seventeen percent of all Virginia school divisions with a mission statement also made references to a student's fully developed potential. Again, there was agreement between the state-level and division-level mission statements, but it was not widespread.

A less apparent series of parallels stemmed from two of Jefferson's more oblique references. As shown by the brackets used under Category 2 of Table 8 above, Jefferson referred to "free government" and its "progress" as being contingent upon the education of the public. In other words, the regulation and continuation of the government was an outcome of education. This idea paralleled the most widely agreed upon outcome among division-level mission statements: citizenship. Forty-two percent of all division-level mission statements cited citizenship as an outcome of education; therefore, there was a fairly high level of de facto consensus between the local school divisions and the state on this point.

There was not, however, absolute agreement. The division-level mission statements also widely referred to lifelong learning (33 percent), economic productivity (35 percent), and preparedness for the future (36 percent) as

outcomes of education. These outcomes were not mentioned or alluded to in the state-level mission statement and, therefore, indicated a significant difference in content.

Analysis of Division Actions

All but one division-level mission statement referred to division actions as a component of their mission, and the state-level mission also referred to actions that the state should take in regard to its educational mission. Whereas the analysis of division-level actions found 75 different specific actions mentioned, the analysis of the state-level mission discovered only two.

Similar to 17 percent of the division-level mission statements, the state-level mission statement referred to the action of "assuring." References to assuring and its synonym "ensuring" were the third most referred to action among school divisions with a mission statement. Although not widely shared among mission statements, the 17 percent that did refer to this action represented a significant proportion of the 75 different actions that were mentioned by school divisions; therefore, there was some level of de facto consensus between the state- and division-level mission statements regarding their actions.

The second action mentioned in the state-level mission statement was, in contrast, not evident at all among the division-level mission statements. Jefferson wrote that the Commonwealth should "avail itself." The content analysis of division-level mission statements did not identify the verb "avail" or any of its synonyms among the statements. Thus, the state-level reference to avail or take

advantage of the products of education represented a significant difference in content between the state-level mission and the division-level missions.

Relatedly, another significant difference between the two levels of mission statements regarded the most widely expressed action among division-level mission statements. More than half of all mission statements referred to their action of providing educational services, etc. Notably, the state-level mission statement did not make any mention of this action; hence, a second significant difference in content between the state-level and division-level mission statements was in regard to the action of providing.

Analysis of Specific Programs

The focus of the fourth initial screening category was on specific programs that school divisions offered as components of their mission statements. Content analysis found that 63 percent of division-level mission statements referred to general educational or instructional programs or opportunities. This was by far the most widely shared content among school division mission statements in this category. It also represented the only references made in the state-level mission statement. Jefferson referred to “the opportunity” and “an effective system of education” as provisions of education. Therefore, the general mention of an educational program and/or opportunity was an area of content shared between the state-level and division-level mission statements.

An illuminating difference between the two levels of mission statements was evident, however, upon closer analysis of the language. Specifically, the content analysis of division-level mission statements found that 27 percent of all

mission statements referred to their division's educational programs as being of "quality" or "excellence." In another light, nearly half of all school divisions that referred to their general educational programs in their mission statements also attached such language indicating high or exceptional quality to them. By way of contrast, the state-level mission statement contained quite a different modifier. Jefferson wrote that the system of education should be "effective." As a modifier, the word "effective" is certainly less forceful than "excellent" or a synonym of it. Thus, the stated expectation of the educational programs of the public education system were quite different between the state's "effective" programs and the local divisions' "excellent" ones.

Analysis of Emergent Categories

The final analysis between the state- and division-level mission statements focused on the emergent categories that the content analysis of division-level mission statements established. The division-level analysis found four emergent categories: partnerships, belief statements, views of society, and reference to the 21st century. Obviously, the last of these (reference to the 21st century) was not expected to be, nor was it, found in a statement penned in 18th century. Neither, however, did Jefferson's statement contain any reference to partnerships in education—a significant difference from the 39 percent of school divisions that mention such in the present day. Still, references to belief statements and to a view of society were found. Before looking at those more closely, however, it is important to remember that these emergent categories are not theoretically-

established components of a typical educational mission statement. Therefore, one should approach the interpretations of significance with some caution.

The state- and division-level mission statements did share some content characteristics regarding expressed belief statements. The state-level mission statement, for instance, stated that "all progress...[rests] upon...." This statement was quite similar to the reference by two local school divisions which included statements concerning how the future depends upon the success of the schools and the success of students. Significantly, however, it was only two school divisions that made such reference in their mission statements; therefore, the contention was not apparently wide-held.

A similar result was found regarding the second of Jefferson's asserted beliefs that there are "those talents which nature has sown so liberally among its people." This language employed by the state indicated a regard for the idea that all individuals have something to offer; as expressed by certain division-level mission statements, all students have worth. Although the state-level mission statement shared this belief statement with some division-level mission statements, the belief was not shared widely. Only two school divisions made mention of it in their mission statements--hardly a widely professed belief.

In addition to shared content regarding certain belief statements, there was also some evidence of a shared view of society between the state- and division-level mission statements. Again, however, the breadth of the de facto consensus was not great. Specifically, the state-level mission statement alluded to a certain view of society with the language citing "free government" as a benefactor of education. Four school divisions also made similar references in their mission

statements. Again, the shared content between the state-level mission statement and some of the division-level mission statements was itself not widely shared school divisions.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This study was undertaken to determine whether the mission statements of Virginia school divisions provide any insight into the purpose of K-12 public education in the Commonwealth. Secondly, it was intended to investigate the similarities and differences between the school divisions' mission statements and the mission statement articulated by the state. With these purposes in mind, the following four research questions were pursued:

1. Do the mission statements of Virginia school divisions share certain content characteristics?
2. To what degrees (i.e., at what frequencies) are such content characteristics shared?
3. What content is not shared widely among the mission statements of Virginia school divisions?
4. What shared content among division-level mission statements is also shared with Virginia's state-level statement of mission, as articulated in the Virginia Constitution?

With the focus of this study on the mission statements of public school divisions, the limited literature of other studies of educational mission statements was reviewed. As described in Chapter 2 of the present study, just four such studies constituted the previous investigations into this component of educational planning (Conley, 1993; Lundquist & Rice, 1992; Newsom & Hayes, 1990-91; Rusch, 1992). Nevertheless, these studies consistently supported a research

methodology for the study of mission statements: content analysis. Using the designs of the previous studies of mission statements as guides and adhering to the theoretical grounds of content analysis methodology, a research design was developed and implemented. (Refer to Chapters 3 and 4.)

Although significant results were forthcoming from the study, one important caution bears attention prior to further discussion. In addition to the limitations of this study referred to in Chapter 3, it must be reiterated that the purpose of this study was not to explore actual practice, but to describe the articulated purposes of Virginia's public school divisions. Therefore, in drawing conclusions from and interpreting results, one is wise to keep in mind the adage that "saying it and doing it are not the same thing." That is, a mission statement may describe a purpose, but that does not mean that the purpose is necessarily served. Likewise, one must show caution in the reverse scenario: Simply because some purpose is not mentioned in a mission statement does not necessarily mean that it is not addressed in the actual practices of a school division. Thus, this study and its conclusions were limited in scope only to the articulated purposes of K-12 school divisions.

Conclusions

The target population of this study was all of the K-12 public school divisions in the state of Virginia. Although school divisions in Virginia are contiguous with political boundaries, various arrangements among certain school divisions have resulted in fewer school divisions than counties, cities, and townships. Specifically, at the time of the study, there were 132 public school

divisions operating in the state. All 132 school divisions responded to and were represented in the study (in other words, a 100 percent response rate to the study). The information provided by the public school divisions of Virginia and the data analysis undertaken for this study led to the following conclusions in regard to the four original research questions.

Prior to discussion of the particular conclusions, however, it is helpful to observe the broader relationships of the findings. In light of the investigation of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia, the findings show on one hand that there is, indeed, evidence of consensus in certain pockets of the content of mission statements. On the other hand, the findings also show that a strong degree of diversity of thought exists in other pockets of content among the mission statements of school divisions and even the state itself. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of these major findings illuminates certain issues regarding trends in public education. These major findings drive the discussion of conclusions which follows.

Shared Content Among Division-Level Mission Statements

Although cited individually, the first two research questions of the study were addressed in tandem in order to determine whether or not de facto consensus existed among school divisions concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia. The possibility of de facto consensus among division-level mission statements had never been specifically addressed previously in educational research, but it was alluded to by Rusch (1992) and also by Conley (1993) in their studies of the strategic plans of public school divisions. The results of the

presented study add credence to their conclusions. Specifically, there is evidence of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia.

The first and most fundamental conclusion of the present study concerned the prevalence of mission statements among school divisions in Virginia. Of 132 school divisions, 89 indicated that they had a mission statement and 88 were able to provide a copy of their mission statement for the study. (The one unavailable statement was under revision.) In other words, fully two-thirds of all school divisions in Virginia had a mission statement. Therefore, the practice alone of articulating the purpose of a school division in the form of a mission statement is widely prevalent among Virginia's public education system.

A second notable conclusion regarding the shared expression of the purpose of public education was found in the prevalence of the initial screening categories among division-level mission statements. Building on the four studies of mission statements in education which preceded the present study, four screening categories were defined. (See Chapters 3 and 4.) Of the 88 school divisions with mission statements, 99 percent of them had language that identified stakeholders; 99 percent had language that identified division actions; 86 percent had language that identified student outcomes; and 77 percent had language that identified specific programs. These results support the findings of the four previous studies that such content areas comprise educational mission statements, and these results indicate that the division-level mission statements of Virginia share these content areas.

But what specific content is shared among Virginia school divisions? One important conclusion involves the stakeholders in public education. Nearly one-third of all Virginia school divisions with a mission statement expressed the belief that the only stakeholders in K-12 public education are the students themselves. However, more than twice that number believe that stakeholderhood includes not only students but also parents, the local community, and, in many cases, a larger community at the national or even global level. These results lead to the conclusion that students are unquestionably the central stakeholders in public education in Virginia. But the preponderance of school divisions that also identified various categories of adults suggests that stakeholderhood in public education goes well-beyond students alone.

Virginia school divisions also expressed a degree of consensus concerning the student outcomes which public education serves. Twenty-two student outcomes were found among the mission statements, but none of these was present in a majority of the statements. There was, however, evidence of a single most common student outcome, and that was citizenship, which was referred to by 42 percent of the divisions with a mission statement. In addition, preparedness for the future, economically productive, lifelong learning, and academic achievement were all relatively common in representation. Again, however, there was no majority opinion regarding the student outcomes of K-12 public education in Virginia. The only majority consensus in this category was that identifying student outcomes is an important component of establishing the mission of education. Perhaps the implication is as John Dewey expressed it: "Ends are, in fact, literally endless, forever coming into existence as new activities occasion

new consequences.” If so, student outcomes are eternally malleable, as might be suggested by the lack of majority among the results of present study of outcomes.

Regarding the content category of division actions, a different result was found. Although 75 different division actions were identified in the mission statements of public school divisions, a 58 percent majority of those school divisions included the action to provide within their mission. Not only does this represent a majority, but, given the relatively large number of different division actions, the fact that one action stands out so prevalently is indeed significant. To further illustrate the significance, one need only be made aware that the next most prevalent division action was expressed by only 17 percent of school divisions. Thus, the act of providing represents a majority consensus regarding the action incumbent on school divisions as part of the purpose of K-12 public education in Virginia.

The act of providing begs the question, providing what? The fourth content category offered some insight into just what school divisions said they would provide as part of their mission. Although seven different categories emerged from the language data, only one of the categories was represented in a majority of mission statements. Specifically, 63 percent of division-level mission statements indicated that the division would provide a general educational program or educational opportunities. Thus, a majority consensus was evident supporting the idea that the purpose of K-12 public education is to provide an educational program.

In summary of the above conclusions, a degree of de facto consensus is evident among the mission statements of Virginia’s K-12 public school divisions.

There is decided consensus that students are the primary stakeholders in public education. They stand the most to gain or to lose with its success or failure, but adult groups, including parents and citizens, also bear a significant stake in education. As to the outcomes for students upon graduation from the Virginia system of public education, there is a minority consensus (42 percent) that good citizenship is the paramount outcome. No absolute majority regarding student outcomes exists, although most school divisions identify student outcomes in general as being central to their mission. A majority of school divisions does, however, agree that it is incumbent upon them to provide the general educational programs necessary for achieving the mission of public education. These conclusions represent the characteristics of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia.

Unique Content of Individual Mission Statements

The third research question addressed by the present study asked, What content is not shared widely among the mission statements of Virginia's school divisions? Given that the results of the content analysis identified numerous cases of infrequently shared content (content shared by some, but not a majority of, school divisions), some of the most relevant conclusions may be drawn from the cases of truly novel, or unique, references.

Regarding the stakeholders of education, for instance, the only unique reference was made among the 88 school divisions was one division's indication that the state was the highest level of stakeholdership. All other mission statements that identified stakeholders referred specifically to parents, the local

community, the nation/society, and/or the world/global society as the highest level of stakeholderhood. The implication is that the view of the state as the single highest level of stakeholderhood in public education is decidedly rare.

In reference to student outcomes, only one school division identified caring as a student outcome of their school division. It was notably absent from all other mission statements. Presumably, the purpose of public education does not include teaching students how to be caring of others. Interestingly, the outcomes of environmental skills, habits of physical well-being, and positive self-esteem—the care of the environment, the care of one’s own body, and the care of one’s own ego, respectively--were more commonly shared among school divisions than the care of others. The significance of this fact is left to the reader.

Regarding school division actions, there were fully 75 that school divisions identified for themselves. This fact alone suggests an apparent lack of consensus concerning exactly what school divisions are supposed to do. Moreover, there were 32 references to division actions out of those 75 that were entirely unique to a particular school division. An additional 39 were found in ten percent or fewer of all mission statements—clearly a lack of consensus regarding most of the division actions identified in the mission statements. (The exception, of course, was the action to provide, which stands as the only action widely shared.) The broad range of actions identified by division-level mission statements is not surprising in the context of previous studies, however. In 1992, Conley drew a similar conclusion and noted that mission statements “do not seem to be limiting or reducing the educational mission of the school district” (p. 25) but expanding it.

A final category of widely varied language was that of specific programs identified by divisions as component parts of their mission. In reference to the school environment, for instance, only one school division referred to the school environment as being "personalized," and only one referred to it as being "dynamic." Regarding specific educational philosophies, only one school division referred specifically to educating the "whole child." Only one school division referred specifically to "technology" as a resource to be provided in support of its mission, while three separate school divisions referred individually to the administrative practices of "efficient operations," "participatory decision-making," and a "customer-oriented focus," respectively. Finally, with regard to educational practices and policies, one school division each referred to "standards in core subjects," "time on task," "fair grading," "elementary, middle, and high school alignment," "tutorial services," and "parent workshops," respectively. Although it is difficult to determine the specific impetuses for these unique references in the mission statements, it is probably safe to conclude that each is a component of its school division's mission statement in response to a local issue or concern at the time of the statement's writing.

In summary of the many unique and infrequently-shared references among the mission statements of Virginia's public school divisions, it is evident that a broad amount of content is not indicative of a de facto consensus among school divisions. In other words, although there are certain shared content characteristics, there is also content not widely shared and, in several instances, unique to particular school divisions. Therefore, de facto consensus concerning

the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia is of a limited scope. There is much variability among individual school divisions.

Similarities and Differences Between the Division- and State-Level Missions

The fourth and final research question addressed by the present study asked, What shared content among division-level mission statements is also shared with Virginia's state-level statement of mission, as articulated in the Virginia Constitution? There were several lines of both similarities and differences within each of the major content categories brought out through the content analysis. Before discussing these, however, it is important to mention the apparent limitation of the comparison. Mission statements are a product of contemporary educational planning techniques. What stands for Virginia's state-level educational mission statement was written, by way of contrast, some two hundred years ago. There is no question that the comparison of language is historically bound; therefore, the conclusions and interpretations that follow must be considered with some caution. Nevertheless, the validity of the comparison must likewise be considered as reasonable, for, although the words are two hundred years old, these same words have been reaffirmed and formally readopted by the Virginia state legislature in the present day. With an understanding of these balancing issues, the following conclusions and interpretations are offered.

Stakeholders.

Language that identified stakeholders proved to be one area of content with much uncertainty between the division- and state-level mission statements.

For instance, 93 percent of all division-level mission statements referred to “students” and/or “children” as stakeholders in K-12 public education. The state-level mission statement made no such reference to the youths who are educated through a system of public instruction; instead, the state-level mission statement referred only to “people.” This reference supported other references to stakeholders made in state-level mission. Specifically, the state-level mission identified both the Commonwealth and the nation as stakeholders in Virginia’s public education system. By way of contrast, nearly one-quarter of all division-level mission statements indicated that stakeholdership in public education did not go beyond the local level. In fact, nearly another one-third of school divisions indicated that stakeholdership did move beyond that of the students themselves. Still, 28 percent of school divisions agreed with the state that the highest level of stakeholdership in Virginia’s public education system was the national/societal level. Thus, although there was no majority consensus between the division- and state-level mission statements regarding stakeholdership, there was also not complete disagreement.

Indeed, one notable point of clear consensus between the local school divisions and the state was that the state itself is certainly not the highest level of stakeholdership in public education. Not only did the state-level mission statement indicate this, but 99 percent of all division-level mission statements indicated this as well. On this point, at least, there was clearly *de facto* consensus: Although public education is within the purview of state government, the state is not the single stakeholder in public education. The unclarity is whether stakeholdership is solely the children’s, whether it stops at the level of the local

community, or whether it includes the national society and, perhaps, beyond. The present study could not distinguish that.

Student outcomes.

A second content category of similarities and differences between the division- and state-level mission statements was that which identified student outcomes of public education. As described in Chapter 4, school divisions identified 22 different student outcomes but no majority consensus was evident for any one of these. For purposes of comparison, Jefferson's language identified three such student outcomes, each of which was represented to some degree in the division-level mission statements. Therefore, there was, again, no clear consensus between the divisions and the state regarding student outcomes, but there was some significant level of agreement.

Specifically, the state-level mission statement included language that identified academic achievement, the full development of potential, and citizenship as student outcomes of public education. Of these, citizenship was the most commonly identified student outcome among division-level mission statements; therefore, citizenship represents the most widely agreed upon student outcome between local school divisions and the state. Closely following citizenship in terms of frequency was academic achievement, which nearly one-third of all school divisions identified as a student outcome. The intent of fully developing the potential of individuals was less widely referred to by school divisions. Also notable in terms of apparent lack of agreement was the omission of reference in the state-level mission to the relatively frequent division-level

outcomes of lifelong learning, economic productivity, and general preparedness for the future. Thus, between the division- and state-level mission statements, the strongest degree of de facto consensus concerning student outcomes was that of developing good citizenship. Citizenship was the single most common goal identified for students among local school divisions and the state.

Division actions.

Of all the school divisions in Virginia with mission statements, everyone except one identified one or more actions that they would undertake in pursuit of their mission. A total of 75 separate actions were identified. The state-level mission statement identified two actions, one of which was shared with the school divisions and the other of which was not.

One action identified by the state-level mission statement was to assure the achievement of certain components of its mission. The act of assuring, or ensuring, was by comparison the third most frequently identified actions among school divisions. However, given the broad spectrum of different actions that were identified, only 17 percent of division-level mission statements included such language. Thus, although some level of agreement existed between state- and division-level mission statements, it was quite limited.

This apparent lack of consensus was even more evident in regard to a second action identified in the state-level mission statement. The state mission statement included that the Commonwealth should avail itself of talents among its people. Interestingly, the verb "to avail" was not mentioned once among the division-level mission statements. In fact, the single most common action

referred to by the school divisions was “to provide,” which was identified by more than half of all division-level mission statements. The contrast between these two actions (to avail and to provide) illuminates a significant lack of accord between the division- and state-level missions. These two actions are very nearly antonyms of each other and seem to point out the conclusion that, whereas school divisions are focusing on providing educational services, the state is seeking to take advantage of the outcomes.

Educational programs.

The fourth content category compared between the division- and state-level mission statements was that of educational programs identified as a component of the educational mission. Although several references to specific programs were found among division-level mission statements, the majority of school divisions (63 percent) made reference to their providing a general educational program, instruction, or opportunity. Similarly, Jefferson’s language identified a “system of education” as a component of the state’s educational mission. Thus, there is clear agreement between the majority of school divisions and the state regarding the provision of an educational program.

An interesting contrast, however, is found in the modifiers used by the local school divisions and the state to describe these programs. Of all of the school divisions that referred to providing an educational program or opportunity as part of their mission, nearly half of them also identified such programs as being of high quality or excellence. In short, the educational programs provided by these school divisions would be of the very best quality. By way of contrast,

however, the language of the state-level mission statement was quite different. The state-level mission statement described that its system of education would be “effective.” Although one may argue what the meaning of “effective” is, it is clear that the stated level of expectation (the difference between “effective” and “excellent”) is a difference of degree. The difference highlights, at the least, a lack of de facto consensus between the state- and division-level mission statements regarding the educational programs incumbent to their missions.

Emergent categories.

As described in Chapters 3 and 4 of the present study, the division-level mission statements were also analyzed for content that did not conform to the parameters of the four initial screening categories. This analysis resulted in four emergent categories--groupings of language by themes, which included partnerships, belief statements, views of society, and references to the 21st century. Not surprisingly, when the language of the Jefferson’s two hundred year-old mission statement was analyzed, no references to the eminent 21st century were forthcoming! Neither, however, was any reference to partnerships found. Nevertheless, references to the remaining two emergent categories were evident.

Belief statements emerged as a category among the division-level mission statements contrary to the theoretical practice of strategic planning (which posits that belief statements are distinct from mission statements). Eight different belief statements about education were expressed by just 17 school divisions, and the most frequently expressed belief was that all children can learn. The state-level mission statement also expressed some belief statements about education; notably

absent, however, was the sentiment that all children can learn. Instead, the state-level mission statement indicated beliefs that progress depends upon successful education and that all individuals have worth. Only two school divisions each expressed similar beliefs in their mission statements. Therefore, there was no de facto consensus regarding expressed beliefs about education.

The second emergent category identified in both the division- and state-level mission statements concerned articulations of a particular view of society. Similar to the conclusion drawn regarding belief statements, however, this content category was not commonly shared. Specifically, Jefferson's only reference to a particular view of society was that the American society is and should be democratic. Such references were also evident among division-level mission statements, but only among four of them. Thus, although citizenship (discussed previously) was the most widely shared student outcome in Virginia, the promotion of the democratic nature of American society was far less widely expressed.

Summary.

In summary of the analysis of the division-level and state-level mission statements of Virginia, a clear, majority consensus was not evident on any given area of content. Certainly, the division- and state-level mission statements did share language that identified the broad categories of stakeholders, student, outcomes, division actions, educational programs, belief statements, and views of society, but no particular language was widely shared regarding who the stakeholders are, which student outcomes are most predominant, what division

actions are essential, etc. In short, de facto consensus does was not widely evident between the division-level mission statements and state-level mission statement of Virginia.

Interpretations and Trends

One of the purposes of this study was to identify instances of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia by analyzing the content of division-level mission statements. Given this, much attention was directed to instances where certain content was shared by a majority of school divisions. But the descriptive nature of this study also allowed for the investigation of certain trends illuminated by the interpretations of the study's conclusions. Such interpretations and trends are cursorily discussed below, not to definitively argue their significance, but to suggest some additional insights gained from their presence.

Safe Schools

Although much attention was given in this study to instances where a majority consensus existed among school divisions, insight was also gained when pockets of agreement were evident among school divisions. One such case was the frequency of references among division-level mission statements to the school environment. Fully one-third of division-level mission statements made some reference to the school environment, and the two most frequent of such references were to ensuring that the school environment would be (1) a place of learning and (2) a place of safety, orderliness, and/or discipline. What is interesting in this

result, however, is the frequency of the references to each of these. Specifically, double the number of references to the safety and orderliness of the school environment were made in division-level mission statements than were made to providing a learning environment. This fact suggests the central role that school safety is coming to play in the priorities of public education. Ensuring that a school is safe is a priority to ensuring that a school is a place of learning.

Partnerships

A second emerging trend illuminated by the data concerns references in division-level mission statements to educational partnerships. Language that identified partnerships suggested that schools and school divisions alone can no longer shoulder the expanding mission of public education. Formal and informal partnerships with parents, community agencies, and other agencies are needed to fulfill the mission of public education. In the present study, 39 percent of division-level mission statements referred to partnerships as a component of their mission. This apparent trend reflects a similar finding by Conley (1993) in his study of division-level strategic plans and mission statements. Conley, too, identified educational partnerships as a trend in K-12 public education.

The Uncertain Future

A third emerging trend evident from the analysis of division-level mission statements in Virginia has less to do with what a school division pursues or how it pursues its mission, but when. One of the emergent categories identified through the content analysis concerned references to the 21st century. Although only six

percent of division-level mission statements made such a reference, these references stood out from other references because they did not conform to any of the initial screening categories. The presence of these references among the mission statements might be interpreted in one of two lights. On one hand, the relatively few number of references to the approaching 21st century may suggest a lack of forward thinking on the part of educational planners. On the other hand, the relatively few lack of references may be indicative of when many of the division-level mission statements in Virginia were written.

Just one-third of school divisions indicated when their mission statement was adopted in their division, but, from this data, some sense of the temporal context of the mission statements could be determined. The “oldest” mission statements (two of them) were adopted in 1988, while the “youngest” (five mission statements) were adopted in 1995. On average, the division-level mission statements were adopted in 1993--just three years prior to this study and just eight years from the 21st century. These facts do seem to implicate local educational planners.

The 21st century is fast approaching, and some school divisions acknowledged such within their mission statements. Why didn't others? Perhaps one reason is that mission statements are linked to strategic planning theory, and strategic planning theory promotes the development of five-year plans. If most division-level mission statements were written in the early 1990s, the 21st century would be “out-of-range” of the mission's purview. Another explanation may be that many of the mission statements could have been written and adopted in the early 1990s or even in the 1980s. From the information provided by local school

divisions for this study, it is difficult to know with certainty. It may be that the reason many of the school divisions did not indicate when their mission statement was adopted was because it was adopted relatively long ago. If so, this would explain, at least in part, the scarcity of references to the 21st century.

There is, however, one other way to view this question. Perhaps the future is posing itself as a great uncertainty to educational planners. Another set of forward-looking language that was found in the analysis of division-level mission statements was a student outcome identified as preparedness for future challenges. This student outcome was present in more than one-third of division-level mission statements, and it was the second most frequently referred to student outcome among school divisions. As frequently as it was referred to, however, this student outcome was ambiguous in its meaning. How is one prepared? For what is one prepared? Does anyone really know what challenges the future will bring? Given the concise nature of mission statements, answers to these questions were not forthcoming, but how could they be? The student outcome of preparedness for the future is replete with uncertainty. Perhaps then the combined references to the future among many of the division-level mission statements in Virginia indicates an acknowledgment of the impending future and an uncertainty about it.

Strategic Planning in Public Education

This study was driven by the determination to investigate the stated purpose of public education in Virginia, and one of the first logistical questions that had to be addressed was, Where does one find the stated purpose of public education? As described in Chapter 2, many forms have been taken to articulate

the purposes of education during the history of public education in the United States. But one must recognize that content and form are integrally related; therefore, a shared form of articulation was sought, and the mission statement associated with the contemporary trend of strategic planning in education was focused upon. Thus, even though the present study was ostensibly one of determining purpose and analyzing mission statements, it also served to tangentially describe the state of strategic planning in education.

As established in Chapter 2, mission statements are a hallmark of strategic planning; thus, the presence of a mission statement is an indicator of past and/or current strategic planning activities. Significantly, 67 percent of the school divisions in Virginia had and provided a mission statement for this study. This indicated that two-thirds of the school divisions in Virginia have undertaken strategic planning as a means of educational planning.

The finding that strategic planning has been prevalent among Virginia's school divisions is indeed significant, for it also is relevant to a trend in Virginia public education developing at the very moment of the writing of this study. During the 1996 session of the Virginia legislature, House Joint Resolution No. 196 had passed both the House and Senate. This bill will create the Virginia Commission on the Future of Public Education, whose purpose will be to develop a mission, goals, and strategic plan for public education in Virginia. The relevance of the present study of characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus concerning the mission of K-12 public education in Virginia is clear in regard to the Commission. Furthermore, the establishment of the commission indicates that, not only at the division level but also at the state level, strategic planning is a

viable means of educational planning at work in Virginia's public education system.

Consensus in Public Education

The essential purpose of the present study was to determine whether any degree of consensus regarding the purpose of public education existed in the state of Virginia. As described previously, there is evidence of some such consensus, at least among local school divisions, but less so between school divisions and the state. But what of consensus in public education within other states, or between states, or even at the national level? Such questions were beyond the purview of the current study, but the indications of varying degrees of consensus in Virginia do support current trends in education nationwide.

As described in the beginning of the present study, public education in the United States is a responsibility omitted from the federal government in the Preamble of the Constitution but undertaken by each of the fifty states. Historical practice, however, has placed the funding and governance of public education on local communities. As the findings of the present study suggest, though, local communities are not entirely unique in their articulated educational purposes. In fact, there does seem to be some degree of consensus regarding the stakeholders, student outcomes, division actions, specific programs, and others components among the division-level mission statements of Virginia's local communities. These findings support the findings of Conley, who in 1993 studied division-level strategic plans and mission statements and concluded that education across the United States seems to be moving toward consensus.

There is other evidence of growing consensus as well. In their review of curriculum issues and trends in public education, Ornstein and Hunkins (1993) wrote, "A new consensus is developing, one that promotes national needs and goals as more important than local or pluralistic needs and goals" (p. 355). There does seem to be a trend toward achieving a national consensus regarding public education. Indeed, the present study found that nearly half of all Virginia division-level mission statements indicated that stakeholdership went beyond the state level to the national or even global level. Further evidence for this trend is found in the current work of national educational organizations to establish national curriculum standards, national teaching licenses, national assessment practices, and more. Indeed, during the very month of the writing of this study, the governors of each of the fifty states met for the 1996 Education Summit. One of the stated goals of this summit was "to build commitment among the participants for taking prompt actions to help states and communities build consensus on education issues" (Carter, 1996).

Achieving consensus is a growing trend in public education. The present study sought to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus concerning the mission of public education in the state of Virginia. Perhaps, though, a more significant conclusion to draw from this study concerns the emphasis, itself, on the growing trend toward consensus in public education.

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Recommendations for Further Study

As with most research, the present study seems to raise more questions than it has answered, and such questions constitute recommendations for further study.

One recommendation is formed from a limitation of the present study: its lack of generalizability to other states. The logical extension of the study, therefore, would be replication of it in other states to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus concerning the mission of public education in those states. Obviously, conclusions could then also be drawn to more directly address the apparent trend toward a national consensus in public education.

On a smaller scale, an analysis of the division-level mission statements in Virginia could be used as further insight into resolving the disparity debate, which is currently troubling the state. The debate centers on whether it is incumbent upon the state to ensure that all school divisions have truly equal or, as is the current practice, equitable financial resources dependent upon local tax bases. The result in the state has been disparity in the amount of money spent per students among the school divisions in Virginia. If common components of a public education mission are shared, should local school divisions be equally financed to achieved such ends? The answer to the question may be further illuminated by a study that compared and contrasted the content characteristics of the mission statements of school divisions on each side of the debate.

Other future studies also may involve more detailed analyses of some of the findings brought to light by this study. For example, are there substantive differences in philosophies, practices, or outcomes of school divisions that

indicate students as the sole stakeholders of education compared to school divisions that indicate various adult groups as stakeholders? Do the 22 different student outcomes identified by Virginia's school divisions reflect a particular educational philosophy, such as society-centered, subject-centered, or child-centered? One may also investigate what level of cognition these outcomes demand of students. Similarly, what are the connotative and denotative meanings of some of the word choices of division-level mission statements? For instance, does the division action to provide suggest a position of accountability or a subtle dismissal of accountability? Or one may further inquire whether the mission statements are ultimately the products of educational planning or political wrangling. Inquiries such as these derive from the present study.

Other recommendations for further study build from another limitation of the present study. This study was limited in its scope to analyzing only that which school divisions and the state articulated as their missions. Of course, a more practical line of questioning evolves from this regarding that which school divisions actually accomplish. Do school divisions achieve their missions in observable ways? If so, do they achieve the same ends by the same means? If they do not achieve their missions, is it because the results are not observable or because they have not been successful? And, of course, the entire premise of strategic planning and mission statements can be called into question by investigating whether there are differences in the achievements of school divisions with a mission statement and those without.

More immediately, and perhaps more practically, it is recommended that the proposed Commission on the Future of Public Education in Virginia study its

own task well. Prior to creating a mission for public education in Virginia, it must look (as the present study has) at the mission statements of its constituent school divisions. Consideration should be given to the purposes of public education that have been articulated both with and without apparent consensus. And the Commission must, of course, also consider the hallowed words of Thomas Jefferson's opinions of public education, which now serve as the mission statement of public education for Virginia. Have two hundred years altered the meaning of those words? Does the lack of clear agreement between the state-level mission statement and the division-level mission statements indicate a flaw in one or the other levels of mission statements?

These questions for further study will be immediately relevant to a commission charged with writing a mission statement to capture the consensus of opinion regarding the purpose of public education for an entire state, for, as the present study indicates, true consensus--whether built or come by--is not easily found in the muddy waters of public education.

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Appendix A: Sample Letter of Request to School Divisions

(Computer codes indicated by <..>.)

<Title>. <First Name> <Last Name>, Superintendent
 <School Division>
 <Street Address>
 <City>, Virginia <Zip Code>

Dear <Title>. <Last Name>:

I am conducting a study of division-level mission statements in Virginia, and I am writing to ask for your assistance in my data collection. I am confident that you will find my request very easy to oblige.

The study is the basis for my dissertation, which I am completing as part of my doctoral program in educational administration at The College of William and Mary under the direction of Dr. Robert Hanny, Dr. James Stronge, and Dr. Robert Estabrook. The purpose of the study is to determine the characteristics and degrees of de facto consensus among Virginia's school divisions concerning the purpose of K-12 public education in the Commonwealth. I am employing a research method called content analysis, and the data needed to complete the study are the actual mission statements (or similar statements of purpose) of Virginia's public school divisions.

Please use the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to send to me a copy of your school division's mission statement. (If your division does not have a mission statement per se, please send a copy of your division's statement of philosophy, organizational goals, or equivalent statement of the purpose of the school division.) To conduct a valid study, I must have such a statement from each school division in the state. I will blindly review the statements, and I will not include the specific names of school divisions in my study. Although the mission statement is all that I need to conduct the study, I would appreciate a notation of the year that the statement was adopted. It would contribute important, supplementary data to the study.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and assistance. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or mail. If you are interested in an executive summary of the results of my study when it is completed, please note that on your return letter to me. I would be happy to provide you and your division with the findings.

Sincerely,

Christopher R. Gareis, Ed.S.
 Toano Middle School
 Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools

Appendix B: Transcribed Mission Statements of Virginia School Divisions

(Presented in random order.)

1. Teaching, Learning, and Caring are the most important products for everyone in the _____ County Public Schools.

2. _____ County Public Schools will provide the educational opportunity for all students to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to live, learn and work in an interdependent, global society. Parents, citizens, and children will share in the development of academic programs and facilities that will enable the schools to serve as a center for the life of the community. These programs will involve all the community in a manner which draws strength from its diversity, fosters mutual respect and improves our society. The combined efforts of the schools and the community will educate students to become life-long learners who are prepared to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

3. Our Mission is to provide a high quality, comprehensive and meaningful education for all students. In our schools, each student will experience success. Each student will be expected to succeed within the bounds of their abilities or chosen educational goals. Each student will be treated as an individual, given the tools to be a life-long learner, and taught to function effectively as a member of a group and as a productive member of society.

4. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide a quality of education for all students through the collaborative efforts of students, staff, parents, and community.

5. We believe that the school must play an important role in the development of individuals capable of functioning effectively in a constantly changing world. We believe however, that this is a responsibility which must be shared between the home, the school and the community. we also believe that each student must assume major responsibility for his/her own development. We believe the school experience should prepare students for life in the society which exists and provide them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve upon that society which currently exists. We believe students who complete their education in our school system should demonstrate skills, attitudes, and competencies in the following areas:
 - verbal communication skills including reading, writing, speaking, and listening;
 - mathematical and computational skills including computer literacy;
 - life skills including family living, positive physical and mental health habits, and personal economic survival skills;
 - citizenship skills including honesty, integrity, fairness, positive moral and spiritual values and a commitment to our nation's heritage and traditions;
 - economic responsibility including preparation for employment and preparation for continuing education. We believe that all students must recognize that learning is a life-long process;
 - social and civic responsibility including a commitment to support societies [sic] institutions through service and stewardship of those resources entrusted to us and the nurturing of the human condition through personal relationships which reflect tolerance of and concern for others;
 - an awareness of our increasing interaction in a global society and the importance of international understanding;
 - cooperation and collaboration skills;

- a range of problem solving skills and strategies with particular emphasis on higher order thinking skills and creativity;
- an appreciation of the arts, both natural and man-made.

It will be our intention to promote, fund, implement, and evaluate programs and services consistent with these beliefs and values as a part of our policy making responsibility.

6. We believe that schools and school systems are a locality's gateway to the future. We know that we exist only for the students and acknowledge that learning is a [sic] essential lifelong function. We are committed to success for every person who ventures into our school system's environment, and we will settle for nothing less.

7. The _____ County public schools are committed to improving student learning skills and providing a quality education in a positive, nurturing, and success-oriented environment so that students will be able to make sound decisions in life.

8. The student is the reason this school division exists. Student learning is our first priority. Educational excellence is required by School Board members, administrators, teachers, parents and students. Educational excellence is accomplished by the following basic beliefs:

- A. All students are capable of learning.
- B. The principal must be the visionary leader in improving student learning and must assume an active, supportive role in the level of classroom instruction.
- C. The teacher must assume a personal responsibility for the education of each student.
- D. The level of student achievement is directly related to the level of teacher expectations.
- E. Parents must actively participate in the education of their child.

Inherent in this Mission Statement is the premise that student learning will prepare students for diverse opportunities in our communities.

Personnel in the school division must be accountable for the achievement of this mission.

9. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide a nationally recognized educational program and staff to develop 21st-Century citizens who can achieve full development of their potential and, as critical thinkers and lifelong learners, exhibit through their character and values a commitment to their community and nation, as well as a personal integrity which will enable them to meet the challenges of change.

10. Our efforts will focus on meeting the intellectual, vocational, social and personal needs of all students.

11. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide educational programs to meet the identified needs of all students in a learning environment that will allow for academic achievement, will help develop a positive outlook, and will foster respect for individual differences.

12. The _____ County School Board wishes to ensure through collaboration of teachers, parents, administrators, and community persons, groups, and agencies, that all graduates are prepared to directly enter and continue in the skilled workforce, or to enter and complete further academic and technical education. The Board further wishes to be certain that students are transported safely to well-maintained facilities where positive nutritional habits for their life are developed and where they are exposed to the highest quality personnel during their educational experience.

13. _____ County school division believes that all children can learn. The mission of the school system therefore, is to ensure that every student will and can become a contributing and productive member of an ever-changing society. It is up to the _____ County School Division to provide opportunities and resources to ensure that individual students are challenged to attain increasingly higher levels of academic achievement while providing for the social, physical and emotional growth.

14. The mission of the _____ County Public School System is to involve the total community in a commitment to an educational process which puts the needs of each child at the forefront and provides the necessary resources and structures to enable each individual to develop into a productive citizen prepared to enter the twenty-first century.

15. The mission of the _____ County School Division is to provide programs and services to meet equitably the educational needs of all students. This shall be accomplished through safe learning environments that stimulate intellectual curiosity and academic achievement, develop positive personal qualities and well-being, and foster respect for individuals.

The foundation of the school system shall be a strong educational program, the central process of which shall be learning how to learn. The program shall emphasize the development and application of knowledge and skills.

The development and implementation of the school division's programs and services shall include community participation and respond to individual, community, state, national, and global priorities and needs.

16. The mission of the school board is to ensure for all students in _____ County an education that enables them to become informed and productive citizens in a democratic society.

17. The _____ County Public School Division believes that all students can learn. It is our mission to provide an appropriate education in an environment that ensures success in the classroom and in future endeavors.

18. To involve families, communities, business, and educators in providing a safe/healthy environment where life-long learning is successfully realized by all students through an individualized/relevant curriculum and instructional program focused on preparing responsible productive citizens for the future.

19. The mission of the _____ County School Board and all of its employees is to educate all students to their highest level of academic performance while fostering positive development of their health, their attitudes and their behaviors so that each individual student may make a positive contribution to our democratic society.

20. The mission of the _____ County Public School System is to provide an educational program and staff to help 21st century citizens achieve full development of their potential. In order to develop this potential, we must nurture lifelong learning and critical thinking skills, and we must prepare our students to meet the challenges of change in real-life situations. The fulfillment of this mission is guided by the knowledge that student success requires a shared responsibility and cooperation by students, school personnel, parents, and community.

21. The primary mission of the _____ County Public School System is to provide adequate opportunity for all children to master academic subjects in a safe and disciplined environment which promotes the development of the whole child.

22. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide a secure learning environment in which all students will be encouraged to develop their unique abilities and potentials.

As a result all students will become life-long learners and responsible, productive members of school and society.

23. It is the mission of _____ County Public Schools to ensure all students an excellent education. To that end, _____ County Public Schools envisions providing the highest quality, most cost-effective education possible by

- increasing students' enthusiasm for learning,
- promoting individual learning ability,
- recruiting and retaining excellent personnel,
- encouraging parental and community support and involvement,
- fostering an inviting environment,
- using continual data analysis,
- emphasizing curriculum renewal,
- offering a meaningful staff development program,
- using current technology,
- requiring efficient operating procedures, and
- evaluating progress and revising goals to achieve this vision.

24. The _____ County Public School Board and all associates are committed to educational success and continuous improvement for all students, associates, the educational system, and society.

25. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide opportunities for all students to develop their full potential. In order to prepare students to meet the challenges of society, we must provide a foundation of knowledge while nurturing lifelong learning and critical thinking skills. We believe that the success of the mission requires a shared responsibility by students, school personnel, parents, and community.

26. The _____ County School Board expects that all students will leave its schools as well-rounded, productive citizens who are good stewards of the world they inherit. The Board believes that all students have the right to learn in a safe environment that develops their critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and technology skills. The Board also recognizes that individuals are unique and in partnership with parents, the community, and school personnel, will prepare students to succeed in a multicultural and changing world.

27. The purpose of _____ County Public Schools is to continually improve the services of education.

28. ACHIEVE.....Everyone Can.

29. The purpose of the _____ County Public Schools is to foster the well being, growth, and development of each child.

Students, staff members, parents, and volunteers are all valued participants in insuring success.

The _____ County Public Schools are nurturing centers that stimulate lifelong learning. All members of the community share in a cooperative partnership to meet the challenges of the future.

30. Recognizing the mutual responsibility of students, family, community and school personnel, the _____ County Public School System will provide a caring environment and challenging educational programs in which all students can learn, grow and become productive citizens and contributing members of society.
31. It is the mission of _____ County Schools to ensure that all students participate in quality learning experiences necessary to grow, adapt and meet the challenges of a changing world.
32. Our mission is...Where Everyone Will Be a Successful Learner.
33. The mission of the _____ County School Board is to provide a results-oriented, dynamic school system which is sensitive to the needs of students, the community, the administration and employees.
The central focus of our schools is to serve children in order that they may develop specific skills, competencies and understanding necessary for success in a changing world.
34. The Board of Education of the _____ County Public Schools adheres to and supports the belief that teaching and learning are the two most important functions that occur in our schools. We further believe that it is the responsibility of the Board of Education to provide the appropriate leadership to the school district and faculty to assure that these functions effectively occur for all children. We, therefore, commit ourselves to providing our children with a well-rounded instructional program which fosters excellence in learning and excellence in teaching, thereby, resulting in a competent, adaptable, and motivated citizenry.
Together with parents, teachers, and students, we will strive to achieve world-class standards in English, mathematics, science, history, and geography, preparing graduates for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment. Each student leaving this school system will have been taught to think independently, act cooperatively, be aware of options in the future, and have been given the tools to compete anywhere with anyone in America.
35. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide the environment where each student is able to reach his or her fullest potential. It is recognized that true learning can take place only in an atmosphere of encouragement, respect, and academic challenge.
Inherent in this mission is the recognition that each student is a unique individual capable of becoming a productive member of society. It is the responsibility of the employees of this school division to guide, nurture, and encourage each student toward this goal. In doing so, all employees, and especially members of our academic community, are accountable for the achievement of the students who are enrolled in this school division.
36. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to prepare each student for the future and for life-long learning.
37. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide education for all within a community which respects, supports, and encourages those who learn and those who teach.
38. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to maximize student learning in an environment that promotes staff involvement and parental community cooperation.
39. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide a quality educational program for all students, to assist each student in reaching his/her potential and to prepare students to be responsible and productive citizens in an ever-changing society.

40. The mission of our school division is to provide the best possible education for ALL students in _____ County.

For our STUDENTS, we will provide a program of quality instruction. We will have high expectations for their achievement. Students will have sufficient time on task and the opportunity to learn through a variety of methods suited to their individual needs. By establishing and maintaining a fair grading system, we will encourage success for all students and will build on their successes. By creating a personalized environment that promotes students' self-esteem, we will help students become involved, responsible learners who reach their potential. We will foster a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment in which learning can take place.

For our STAFF MEMBERS, we will provide a high quality of working life. We will establish and maintain equitable salaries and favorable working conditions for teachers and other employees. To develop each employee's potential, we will offer a variety of professional growth activities. To nurture a collegial climate, we will offer staff development in consensus-building, accountability, creativity, problem-solving, and participatory decision-making. To facilitate open channels of communication, we will operate a network of advisory committees at the building and division levels.

For the PARENTS and other CITIZENS of _____ County, we will demonstrate cost consciousness by maintaining the level of expenditures within the constraints of the approved budget, while seeking ways in which business and industry can financially endorse public education. We will communicate with parents through frequent and varied reports concerning student accomplishments. We will strive to produce graduates with the necessary skills to enter the job market or to pursue higher education. We will promote community involvement in the schools through high quality communication, volunteer programs, parent education, advisory committees, publications, support of PTAs/PTOs, and the Adopt-A-School program. We will maintain clean, attractive schools and a safe, efficient transportation system.

We believe we can best accomplish our mission and ensure student success by cultivating an atmosphere marked by mutual trust, fairness, warmth, and personalization among students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and the community.

41. In light of our belief that all children can learn, the mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to work with parents and the community to

- establish and uphold high academic standards for students, and
- provide effective instructional programs, facilities, and services which assist and support students in achieving success in school and life.

42. The mission of _____ County School Division is to engage all students in meaningful learning experiences, in order for them to become responsible, contributing citizens and life-long learners.

43. The mission of _____ County Public Schools is to prepare all students so that they develop the knowledge and skills to achieve success and become active citizens who contribute to their communities.

44. The mission of _____ County Public Schools is to prepare students for post-secondary education and/or the workforce and to become life-long learners. _____ County Schools will meet the educational needs of all students in a safe and secure learning environment which stimulates intellectual curiosity, develops positive personal qualities, fosters respect for individual differences, encourages parental involvement, and emphasizes high expectations for students' achievement and behavior.

45. The _____ County Schools shall provide a safe, supportive, and challenging environment where all children learn.

To achieve this mission, it shall be the policy of the school board to:
 Provide the necessary trained and dedicated leadership, qualified personnel, equipment and materials to assure an appropriate education for every student, regardless of race, color, sex, physical condition, or national origin;
 Treat all personnel equally with the highest degree of respect;
 Appropriate funds fairly and equally;
 Give attention to schools that have been neglected over a period of years to assure that the property and quality of equipment of said schools may be upgraded, and repaired in order to be comparable to the best schools in the Division.

46. The mission of the _____ County School Division is to provide an educational program that will enable our students to fill worthy and diverse roles and accept opportunities in our community.

In accomplishing this mission, students will be provided with programs and activities so that they will be motivated to fully utilize their talents, resources, and capabilities. The citizens of _____ County, with the assistance of state and federal governments, are united in this effort.

Educational excellence is accomplished by complying with the following basic beliefs:

- All students are capable of learning.
- The principal must be the visionary educational leader in improving student learning and must assume an active, supportive role in providing classroom instruction.
- The teacher must assume a personal responsibility for the education of each student. Student achievement is directly related to the expectations of the teacher.
- Parents must actively participate in the education of their children.
- The students must realize that self-discipline is essential for achievement.
- Community support and interest are achieved as the community becomes informed and involved in the programs, activities and mission of the school division.

Personnel in _____ County School Division must be accountable for the achievement of this mission.

47. The mission of the _____ County School Division is to prepare all students to become lifelong learners by providing them with a quality education in a challenging learning environment.

48. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to maintain an exemplary public school system with an instructional program that provides the opportunities and resources for each student to develop his or her full learning potential.

49. The primary mission of _____ County Schools is to provide and promote a dynamic environment for learning through which all students acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to live as informed and productive members of society.

50. _____ County Public Schools believe in the worth and dignity of all children and that they are entitled to a World Class Education that will enable them to live successfully in the 21st Century.

To this end, the _____ County Public Schools will strive to:

- provide a conducive learning environment that supports the premise that all children can learn.
- instill an appreciation for the values of a democratic society that will improve the quality of life for all.
- be accountable to our constituency through a strong program of evaluation including academic achievement and other outcome indicators associated with student success.

- foster, develop, and sustain supportive school and community relationships (e.g., parents, business, and industry) by providing an effective means of communication including access and input into the educational process through a variety of school/community inter-action programs.

51. The mission of _____ County Public Schools is to achieve the mandates of the Virginia Department of Education, to continue the improvement of instruction in a positive manner, and to create a welcome climate for students, parents, and employees. This mission is to be accomplished in a team setting where the team shall include students, parents, employees, residents, industry, and local merchants.

52. It is the mission of the _____ County Schools to provide a nurturing environment in which ALL students will receive the best possible education. We will provide the following: a program of quality instruction with high expectations for achievement; an environment that is safe, comfortable, and conducive for learning; opportunities for each student to develop a positive self-image and positive attitudes toward others and learning; and a climate in which all students achieve their potential intellectually, socially, aesthetically, personally, and physically.

53. The _____ County Public Schools are places where students receive a quality education in an environment which promotes individual growth and initiative. The staff works with the family and the community to foster students' intellectual, physical, social, moral, and ethical development consistent with the needs of productive citizens. A central element in this mission is to prepare students to live full and useful lives and to work confidently and cooperatively through democratic institutions to improve the quality of life for all people by:

- I. Sustaining a school climate where academic achievement is valued, acknowledged, and advanced by the staff and parents and pursued with vigor by the students;
- II. Creating a school climate which promotes strong positive self-concepts and generates interventions to ensure the continued personal growth of each student;
- III. Securing a well qualified school staff whose role, central to the education of the children, is recognized and respected, and whose productive service will be acknowledged through continued support, fair compensation, and appreciation.
- IV. Teaching a curriculum of comprehensive studies in the elementary schools with increasing differentiation occurring in the middle and high schools to accommodate diverse personal and vocational interests;
- V. Maintaining a physical and social environment which is conducive to the learning process;
- VI. Ensuring that the learning environment is one which gives students ample opportunity to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills;
- VII. Recognizing the differing needs and interests of individual students and providing appropriate topics of study and instructional activities which will enhance and stimulate each student's growth and development;
- VIII. Instilling in each student those common values necessary for living and working together as responsible citizens in a democratic society; and
- IX. Fostering a broader understanding and appreciation of the school system in the community and stimulating closer links among teachers, students, and parents.

54. The _____ County Schools, with its commitment to excellence and equity, will educate all students to be productive, responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a rapidly changing, global society.

55. The mission of the _____ County School System is to provide a dynamic school system that is sensitive to the needs of students, parents, community, employees, and the administration.

The central focus of our schools is to serve children in order that they may develop specific skills, competencies, and understanding necessary for success in a changing world.

56. The _____ Public Schools' educational mission is based on the belief that all students can learn. To this end, we strive to ensure that our students receive the skills necessary to become productive, creative and caring individuals.

To accomplish our mission, we accept responsibility for:

- Creating a safe, secure and nurturing environment which encourages children to become responsible citizens.
- Recognizing the value of parents and school officials working together to ensure the development of a strong and effective partnership.
- Providing learning opportunities for parents and students through extensive tutorial services, child care, and parent workshops.
- Maintaining high personal and professional expectations for ourselves, students and parents.

57. _____ City Schools empowers everyone to be life-long learners.

58. The mission of the _____ City Public Schools, in partnership with our entire community, is to ensure that each student is empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of the future.

59. The Mission of _____ Public Schools is to provide a quality education for all students.

To this end, _____ Public Schools will ensure:

- An effective instructional program
- A safe and orderly environment
- An atmosphere which is conducive to learning
- A motivated, committed and skilled staff.

60. The mission of the _____ City Schools is to graduate students who aspire to achieve and who are prepared to participate fully in a free and democratic society. Our students will be expected to master a challenging set of academic standards. They will be taught to find and use information, speak and write effectively, make responsible decisions, and work to achieve personal goals. Our students will learn to appreciate history, diversity and the achievements of humankind. They will learn to make contributions to the well-being of the community. Upon graduation, our students will be prepared to secure employment, continue their education, and adapt skillfully to a changing technological society.

61. The mission of the _____ City School System is to provide the best possible education for each student in [the city] and opportunities for life-long learning for members of the community.

62. The _____ Public School System will provide quality educational services for students that meet or exceed the needs of our customers.

63. Every _____ City Schools student will receive effective instruction in essential skills so that he/she may be a successful learner.

64. The _____ City School personnel will successfully educate all of their students in a safe and healthy environment.

65. Creating an educational system that keeps pace with the increased global demands on our students is a challenge--an undertaking that all of us who care about the future and aspirations of our children are excited to meet. The _____ City School System pledges to be innovative in meeting these challenges. Our goal is to develop citizens who not only think but comprehend, not only learn but apply their knowledge, and who treasure their learning experiences. The learning and living environment cultivated within _____ Schools will develop academic skills as well as foster our students' belief in their own self-worth, their role as members of the community, and their responsibilities to themselves and others. We will impart to our students the value and appreciation of lifelong learning. By working together, we can provide a flexible educational system that meets the needs of the students, the community, and the future work place. The success of our children depends on our success in implementing these goals.

66. The mission of _____ Public Schools is to educate [the city's] students, preparing them for constructive participation in society. In application, the mission is Teaching for Learning for All through systemwide educational opportunities whose measurable outcomes reflect "equity," "quality," and "excellence." Underlying this commitment to continuous school improvement are the beliefs that ALL students can learn and that schools improve both collectively and one at a time.

67. The mission of _____ City Schools is to provide challenging, progressive educational opportunities and experiences that are responsive to the needs and talents of all students.

68. The _____ public school system is committed to the academic success of all students regardless of family structure, income, gender, or ethnic origin, and its MISSION is to provide them with the opportunity to achieve full development of their potential through the acquisitions of values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are essential to becoming confident and productive adults, enthusiastic lifelong learners, active and constructive participants in the democratic process, and contributing members of their families, communities, and the world.

69. The mission of the _____ City Public School System is to provide educational programs for all students consistent with each individual's abilities and needs through curricular, co-curricular, and community programs. The members of the school staff strive to enrich the lives of students to enable them to become active partners in our community's development with a global society.

70. _____ City Public Schools, in cooperation with students, parents, guardians and the community, pledge to prepare responsible citizens by developing:

- Flexibility and resilience in adapting to a changing society
- Use of technology to improve the quality of life and learning
- Thinking, problem solving and decision making skills
- Understanding of self and diversity within the community
- Reading, writing and computational skills
- Effective communication skills that promote and demonstrate integrity and decency.

As a result, our students will be empowered to live and work productively in the 21st century.

71. The _____ City Schools, with its [sic] Tradition of Excellence, recognizes the uniqueness and worth of all students and will educate each student to be a productive, responsible and contributing member of a diverse multicultural society.

72. The mission of the _____ City Public Schools is to provide all students with skills and knowledge, empowering them to become productive, responsible citizens.

73. Our mission is to prepare every student to succeed and to contribute to a better world. We will strive to do this in an academically-challenging, safe, and nurturing environment where all students, parents, and community members are active participants.

74. _____ Public Schools, in partnership with the home and the community, will provide each student with a relevant, quality education. The skills taught shall enable each student to become a self-sufficient, productive member of the global society prepared to enter the job market and/or continue his/her education.

75. The public school is an agency established to provide the skills necessary for students to contribute to and benefit from a modern society. We believe that all children can and will learn.

The mission of the _____ Public Schools is the teaching of children and maximizing of their potential through a world class education. The _____ Public Schools are committed to providing the curriculum, personnel, facilities, programs and activities that will enable children to achieve this goal.

76. The mission of the City of _____ School Division is to provide the environment and resources that enable and encourage all students to acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to become successful, responsible contributors to society.

77. The _____ City Public School System's goal is to produce students with a positive self-esteem, a knowledge and utilization of basic skills, and the physical ability to perform responsibly in today's society.

78. The mission of the _____ School Board is to provide our students with high quality educational experiences so that our public schools are the choice of all [citizens in the city]; to ensure that parents, families and the community-at-large are involved in the activities of students; and to ensure that students:

- master the essential skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and reasoning;
- grow creatively, culturally and physically in order to become life-long learners; and
- learn to appreciate cultural diversity, become responsible citizens, and lead productive lives.

79. The _____ City Schools will create school experiences to ensure that all students learn and demonstrate skills needed for lifelong learning.

80. It is the ongoing educational mission of _____ Public Schools to provide the best possible education for the young people of _____. Our children are indeed our future--the hope for a brighter tomorrow. Toward that end, we pledge to prepare all students to be self-sufficient and fulfilled citizens who are responsible and participating members of society. We shall continue our quest for excellence in education as we serve the students and citizens of this great city. In the _____ Public Schools --WE PROMOTE EXCELLENCE!

81. _____ City Schools will provide a quality education that assures lifelong success for all students.

82. We, the _____ City Public School System, pledge to be customer oriented and provide leadership for quality schools. In the pursuit for these ideals, we will strive to serve:

STUDENTS by providing, in a safe and healthy environment, an education for all students

PARENTS by communicating effectively to involve them in school activities

EMPLOYEES by recognizing them as professionals and treating [them] with dignity and respect
BUSINESS by working closely with them to produce a more competitive workforce
CITIZENS by enlisting their help to improve our educational system and enhance our community.

83. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to provide programs to meet the educational needs of all students in a safe learning environment that stimulates intellectual curiosity, develops positive personal qualities and well-being, fosters respect for individual differences, encourages parental involvement, and emphasizes high expectations for student achievement and behavior.
84. The mission of the _____ County School System is to ensure that all children of school age in _____ County and _____ City receive the highest quality education appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.
85. The mission of the _____ School Division is to achieve excellence in education, through partnership with home and community, so that each student becomes:
- a lifelong learner
 - an independent thinker
 - a responsible citizen.
86. The mission of the _____ County Public Schools is to ensure that all children have a stable and safe environment in which to learn, caring and well-trained teachers, and appropriate and adequate resources that will enable them to become life-long learners. Our mission is based on the belief that all children have worth and can learn.
87. The ultimate goal of education is that each student may realize his/her fullest potential in the utilization of talents, skills and intellect. The basic purpose of schooling is to provide the instruction and support for students to develop the fundamental skills and processes essential for the lifelong acquisition of knowledge. Inasmuch as students differ in their rate of physical, mental, emotional and social development, learning opportunities must be provided which are compatible with the differing needs of individual learners. The school board accepts the responsibility of providing appropriate instruction and affirms its commitment to educational excellence and equity for all students.
88. It is the mission of the _____ School System to maximize the intellect and abilities of all of our children so they will: be prepared for a life of continuous learning; be happy; be fulfilled; and, at a minimum, be able to provide the basic necessities of life for themselves and their future families.

Appendix C: Categorical Analysis of Mission Statements

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
1.	<p>for everyone in the _____ County Public Schools</p>	<p>Learning to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to live, learn and work in an interdependent, global society</p>	<p>Teaching Caring provide educate students to serve involves fosters improves</p>	<p>educational opportunity the development of academic programs and facilities</p>	<p>Partnership: combined efforts of the schools and the community Parents, citizens, and children will share involve all the community in a manner which draws strength from its diversity These programs will involve all the community in a manner which...fosters mutual respect and improves our society the schools to serve as a center for the life of the community View of society: interdependent, global society</p>
2.	<p>For all students Parents, citizens, and children the schools and the community global society</p>	<p>to become life-long learners who are prepared to meet the challenges of the interdependent, global society</p>		<p>a high quality, comprehensive and meaningful education Each student will be treated as an individual</p>	<p>Partnership: through the collaborative efforts of students, staff, parents, and community</p>
3.	<p>all students each student society</p>	<p>given the tools to be a life-long learner, and taught to function effectively as a member of a group and as a productive member of society each student will experience success Each student will be expected to succeed within the bounds of their abilities or chosen educational goals</p>	<p>provide treat</p>	<p>a quality of education</p>	
4.	<p>all students students, staff, parents, and community</p>		<p>to provide</p>		

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
5.	<p>the home, the school and the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- each student --- society --- world 	<p>the development of individuals capable of functioning effectively in a constantly changing world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- the school experience should prepare students for life in the society which exists and provide them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to <u>insure upon that society</u> which currently exists --- students who complete their education in our school system should demonstrate skills, attitudes, and competencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verbal communication skills including reading, writing, speaking, and listening; • mathematical and computational skills including computer literacy; • life skills including family living, positive physical and mental health habits, and personal economic survival skills; • citizenship skills including honesty, integrity, fairness, positive moral and spiritual values and a commitment to our nation's heritage and traditions; • economic responsibility, including preparation for employment and education. We believe that all students must recognize that learning is a life-long process; • social and civic responsibility including a commitment to support societal (sic) institutions through service and stewardship of those resources entrusted to us and the nurturing of the human condition through personal relationships which reflect tolerance of and concern for others; • an awareness of our increasing interaction in a global society and the importance of international understanding; • cooperation and collaboration skills; • a range of problem solving skills and strategies with particular emphasis on higher order thinking skills and creativity; • an appreciation of the arts, both natural and man-made. 	<p>school must play an important role to promote, fund, implement, and evaluate programs and services consistent with these beliefs and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- shared --- prepare 	<p>each student must assume major responsibility for his/her own development</p>	<p>Partnership: a responsibility which must be shared between the home, the school and the community</p> <p>View of society: constantly changing world</p>
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- we exist only for the students --- every person who ventures into our school system's environment 	<p>learning is a (sic) essential lifelong function</p>	<p>We are committed to success...and we will settle for nothing less</p>		<p>Belief statement: schools and school systems are a locality's gateway to the future</p>

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
7.	students	students will be able to make sound decisions in life — improving student learning skills	committed to — providing — improving — nurturing prepare — be accountable	a positive, nurturing, and success-oriented environment — a quality education	
8.	the student is the reason this school division exists — School Board members, administrators, teachers, parents and students — our communities	student learning will prepare students for diverse opportunities in our communities		The principal must be the visionary leader in improving student learning and must assume an active, supportive role in the level of classroom instruction. — The teacher must assume a personal responsibility for the education of each student. — The level of student achievement is directly related to the level of teacher expectations. — a nationally recognized educational program and staff	Partnership: Parents must actively participate in the education of their child. Belief statements: Student learning is our first priority All students are capable of learning.
9.	21st-Century citizens — community and nation	to develop 21st-Century citizens who can achieve full development of their potential and, as critical thinkers and lifelong learners, exhibit through their character and values a commitment to their community and nation, as well as a personal integrity which will enable them to meet the challenges of change	to provide		21st century: 21st-Century
10.	all students	intellectual, vocational, social and personal needs of all students	meeting		
11.	all students	will help develop a positive outlook, and will foster respect for individual differences	to provide — to meet	educational programs to meet the identified needs of all students in a learning environment	
12.	teachers, parents, administrators, and community persons, groups, and agencies — students	all graduates are prepared to directly enter and continue in the skilled workforce, or to enter and complete further academic and technical education — positive nutritional habits for their life.	to ensure	students are transported safely to well-maintained facilities — students are exposed to the highest quality personnel	Partnership: through collaboration of teachers, parents, administrators, and community persons, groups, and agencies
13.	all children — every student — society	every student will and can become a contributing and productive member of an ever-changing society — attain increasingly higher levels of academic achievement while providing for the social, physical and emotional growth	to provide — to ensure	opportunities and resources to ensure that individual students are challenged	Belief statement: all children can learn. View of society: ever-changing society
14.	the total community — each child	to enable each individual to develop into a productive citizen prepared to enter the twenty-first century	to involve — provides — commitment — enable	an educational process which puts the needs of each child at the forefront and provides the necessary resources and structures	Partnership: involve the total community in a commitment to an educational process 21st century: twenty-first century

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15.	all students — individual, community, state, national, and global priorities and needs	develop positive personal qualities and well-being, and foster respect for individuals — learning how to learn — the development and application of knowledge and skills — intellectual curiosity and academic achievement	to provide — to meet — respond to — stimulate	The foundation of the school system shall be a strong educational program — programs and services to meet equably the educational needs of all students through safe learning environments that stimulate	Partnership: The development and implementation of the school division's programs and services shall include community participation and respond to individual, community, state, national, and global priorities and needs View of society: a democratic society
16.	all students in _____ County	an education that enables them to become informed and productive citizens in a democratic society	to ensure	an appropriate education in an environment that ensures success in the classroom	Belief statement: all students can learn
17.	all students	success... in future endeavors	to provide	through an individualized/ relevant curriculum and instructional program	View of society: our democratic society
18.	families, communities, business, and educators	life-long learning	to provide	a safe/healthy environment	View of society: our democratic society
19.	all students — society	responsible productive citizens for the future all students to their highest level of academic performance — positive development of their health, their attitudes and their behaviors — each individual student may make a positive contribution to our democratic society	to educate — fostering		View of society: our democratic society
20.	students, school personnel, parents, and community — 21st century citizens	21st century citizens achieve full development of their potential — lifelong learning and critical thinking skills — students to meet the challenges of change in real-life situations to master academic subjects	to provide — nurture — prepare	an educational program and staff	Partnership: shared responsibility and cooperation by students, school personnel, parents, and community 21st century: 21st century
21.	all children		to provide — promotes	adequate opportunity — a safe and disciplined environment which promotes the development of the whole child — a secure learning environment in which all students will be encouraged to develop their unique abilities and potentials	
22.	all students — society	all students will become life-long learners and responsible, productive members of school and society	to provide		

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
23.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students — parental and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students' enthusiasm for learning — individual learning ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to ensure — providing — increasing — promoting — recruiting and retaining — encouraging — focusing — using — emphasizing — offering — requiring — evaluating progress and revising goals to achieve this vision — to provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — an excellent education — the highest quality, most cost-effective education possible — excellent personnel — an inviting environment — continual data analysis — curriculum renewal — a meaningful staff development program — current technology — efficient operating procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: parental and community support and involvement
24.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students, associates, the educational system, and society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — educational success and continuous improvement for all students — all students to develop their full potential 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — opportunities for 	
25.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students, school personnel, parents, and community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — prepare students to meet the challenges of society — a foundation of knowledge while nurturing lifelong learning and critical thinking skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — provide — prepare — nurturing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: a shared responsibility by students, school personnel, parents, and community — View of society: challenges of society
26.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students — parents, the community, and school personnel — the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — well-rounded, productive citizens who are good stewards of the world they inherit — prepare students to succeed in a multicultural and changing world — critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and technology skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — prepare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — a safe environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: in partnership with parents, the community, and school personnel — Belief statements: all students have the right to learn — individuals are unique — View of society: multicultural and changing world
27.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to continually improve the services of education. — ACHIEVE. 		
28.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Everyone 				
29.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — each child — Students, staff members, parents, and volunteers are all valued participants in insuring success — All members of the community share in a cooperative partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to foster — share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Schools are nurturing centers — the well being, growth, and development of each child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: Students, staff members, parents, and volunteers are all valued participants in insuring success — All members of the community share in a cooperative partnership to meet the challenges of the future
30.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students, family, community and school personnel — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — become productive citizens and contributing members of society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — a caring environment and challenging educational programs in which all students can learn, grow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: mutual responsibility of students, family, community and school personnel

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31.	all students — world	adapt and meet the challenges of a changing world	to ensure that	all students participate in quality learning experiences necessary to grow	View of society: a changing world
32.	Everyone	Where Everyone Will Be a Successful Learner			
33.	students, the community, the administration and employees	in order that they may develop specific skills, competencies and understanding necessary for success in a changing world	to provide — to serve children	a results-oriented, dynamic school system which is sensitive to the needs of students, the community, the administration and employees	View of society: a changing world
34.	world — all children — parents, teachers, and students — America	Preparing graduates for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment — will have been taught to think independently, act cooperatively, be aware of options in the future, and have been given the tools to compete anywhere with anyone in America — resulting in a competent, adaptable, and motivated citizenry	to provide — to serve children — to provide — to guide, nurture, and encourage each student toward this goal — to prepare each student	world-class standards in English, mathematics, science, history, and geography — a well-rounded instructional program which fosters excellence in learning and excellence in teaching — it is the responsibility of the Board of Education to provide the appropriate leadership to the school district and faculty to assure that these functions effectively occur for all children	Partnership: Together with parents, teachers, and students — Belief statements: teaching and learning are the two most important functions that occur in our schools
35.	each student — society	becoming a productive member of society — each student is able to reach his or her fullest potential	to provide — to guide, nurture, and encourage each student toward this goal — to prepare each student	the environment where — an atmosphere of encouragement, respect, and academic challenge	Belief statements: each student is a unique individual
36.	each student	prepared for the future and for lifelong learning			
37.	those who learn and those who teach		to provide — respects — supports — encourages — to maximize	education for all within a community which respects, supports, and encourages those who learn and those who teach	
38.	student		to provide — to prepare		Partnership: staff involvement and parental community cooperation
39.	all students — society	students to be responsible and productive citizens in an ever-changing society — each student in reaching his/her potential	to provide — to assist	a quality educational program	View of society: an ever-changing society

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
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40.	<p>ALL students in _____ County</p> <p>— students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and the community</p>	<p>students become involved, responsible learners who reach their potential</p> <p>— produce graduates with the necessary skills to enter the job market or to pursue higher education</p> <p>— success for all students and will build on their successes</p>	<p>to provide</p> <p>— have high expectations for their achievement</p> <p>— encourage</p> <p>— cultivating</p> <p>— establishing and maintaining</p> <p>— creating</p> <p>— foster</p> <p>— promotes</p> <p>— develop</p> <p>— nurture</p> <p>— operate</p> <p>— demonstrate</p> <p>— seeking</p> <p>— communicate</p> <p>— produce</p>	<p>the best possible education</p> <p>— a program of quality instruction</p> <p>— Students will have sufficient time on task and the opportunity to learn through a variety of methods suited to their individual needs</p> <p>— a fair grading system</p> <p>— a personalized environment that promotes students' self-esteem</p> <p>— a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment in which learning can take place</p> <p>—</p> <p>For our STAFF MEMBERS, we will provide a high quality of working life. We will establish and maintain equitable salaries and favorable working conditions for teachers and other employees. To develop each employee's potential, we will offer a variety of professional growth activities. To nurture a collegial climate, we will offer staff development in consensus-building, accountability, creativity, problem-solving, and participatory decision-making. To facilitate open channels of communication, we will operate a network of advisory committees at the building and division levels.</p> <p>For the PARENTS and other CITIZENS of _____ County, we will demonstrate cost consciousness by maintaining the level of expenditures within the constraints of the approved budget, while seeking ways in which business and industry can financially endorse public education. We will communicate with parents through frequent and varied reports concerning student accomplishments... We will promote community involvement in the schools through high quality communication, volunteer programs, parent education, advisory committees, publications, support of PTAs/PTOs, and the Adopt-A-School program. We will maintain clean, attractive schools and a safe, efficient transportation system.</p>	<p>Partnership: an atmosphere marked by mutual trust, fairness, warmth, and personalization among students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and the community</p>
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Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
41.	all children — parents and the community	achieving success in school and life	establish and uphold high academic standards for students — provide — assist — support	effective instructional programs, facilities, and services which assist and support students	Partnership: with parents and the community Belief statement: all children can learn
42.	all students	to become responsible, contributing citizens and life-long learners	to engage all students	meaningful learning experiences	
43.	all students — their communities	so that they develop the knowledge and skills to achieve success and become active citizens who contribute to their communities	to prepare all students		
44.	students	prepare students for post-secondary education and/or the workforce and to become life-long learners — stimulates intellectual curiosity, fosters respect for individual differences — emphasizes high expectations for students' achievement and behavior	will meet the educational needs of all students — administers — fosters — encourages — emphasizes — prepare and provide	a safe and secure learning environment	Partnership: encourages parental involvement
45.	all children		will provide — Treat — Give attention	a safe, supportive, and challenging environment where all children learn — the necessary trained and dedicated leadership, qualified personnel, equipment and materials to assure an appropriate education for every student, regardless of race, color, sex, physical condition, or national origin — Treat all personnel equally with the highest degree of respect — Appropriate funds fairly and equally	Give attention to schools that have been neglected over a period of years to assure that the property and quality of equipment of said schools may be upgraded, and repaired in order to be comparable to the best schools in the Division

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46.	<p>All students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The citizens of _____ County, with the assistance of state and federal governments, are united in this effort - parents - community 	<p>enable our students to fill worthy and diverse roles and accept opportunities in our community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they will be motivated to fully utilize their talents, resources, and capabilities 	<p>to provide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enable - motivate - be accountable 	<p>students will be provided with programs and activities so that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The principal must be the visionary educational leader in improving student learning and must assume an active, supportive role in providing classroom instruction. - The teacher must assume a personal responsibility for the education of each student. Student achievement is directly related to the expectations of the teacher. - The students must realize that self-discipline is essential for achievement. - a quality education in a challenging learning environment - an exemplary public school system - an instructional program that provides the opportunities and resources for - dynamic environment for learning through which 	<p>Partnership: Parents must actively participate in the education of their children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community support and interest are achieved as the community becomes informed and involved in the programs, activities and mission of the school division. - Belief statements: All students are capable of learning.
47.	all students	become lifelong learners	providing		
48.	each student	each student to develop his or her full learning potential	to maintain	provides	
49.	all students	informed and productive members of society	to provide and promote a		
50.	<p>all children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parents, business, and industry - community - society 	<p>all students acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to live to live successfully in the 21st Century</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an appreciation for the values of a democratic society that will improve the quality of life for all 	<p>will strive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide - instill - be accountable to our constituency - foster, develop, and sustain 	<p>a constructive learning environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a strong program of evaluation including academic achievement and other outcome indicators associated with student success 	<p>Partnership: supportive school and community relationships (e.g., parents, business, and industry) by providing an effective means of communication including access and input into the educational process through a variety of school/community inter-action programs</p> <p>Belief statements: County Public Schools believe in the worth and dignity of all children and that they are entitled to a World Class Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all children can learn - View of society: a democratic society
51.	<p>students, parents, employees, residents, industry, and local merchants</p> <p>Virginia Department of Education</p>		<p>to achieve the mandates of the Virginia Department of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to continue - to create - to provide 	<p>the improvement of instruction in a positive manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a welcome climate for students, parents, and employees - a climate in which 	<p>21st century: 21st Century Partnership: a team setting where the team shall include students, parents, employees, residents, industry, and local merchants</p>
52.	ALL students	all students achieve their potential intellectually, socially, academically, personally, and physically			

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55.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — family and the community — students — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — productive citizens — to live full and useful lives and to work confidently and cooperatively through democratic institutions to improve the quality of life for all people — critical thinking and problem solving skills — responsible citizens — those common values necessary for living and working together as responsible citizens in a democratic society — students' intellectual, physical, social, moral, and ethical development consistent with the needs of productive citizens — academic achievement — strong positive self-concepts and generative interventions to ensure the continued personal growth of each student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to prepare students — Sustaining — Creating — Securing — Teaching — Maintaining — Ensuring — Recognizing the differing needs and interests of individual students and providing — Instilling in each student — Fostering — provides — valued, acknowledged, and advanced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The _____ County Public Schools are places where students receive a quality education in an environment which promotes individual growth and initiative — a school climate — a well qualified school staff whose role, central to the education of the children, is recognized and respected, and whose productive service will be acknowledged through continued support, fair compensation, and appreciation — a curriculum of comprehensive studies in the elementary schools with increasing differentiation occurring in the middle and high schools to accommodate diverse personal and vocational interests — a physical and social environment which is conducive to the learning process — the learning environment is one which gives students ample opportunity to develop — appropriate topics of study and instructional activities which will enhance and stimulate each student's growth and development — a broader understanding and appreciation of the school system in the community and stimulating closer links among teachers, students, and parents — commitment to excellence and equity — a dynamic school system — a safe, secure and nurturing environment — learning opportunities for parents and students through extensive tutorial services, child care, and parent workshops — high personal and professional expectations for ourselves, students and parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: The staff works with the family and the community — View of society: a democratic society
56.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students — global society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to be productive, responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a rapidly changing, global society that they may develop specific skills, competencies, and understanding necessary for success in a changing world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — educate — commitment — provide — to serve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: sensitive to the needs of students, parents, community, employees, and the administration — View of society: a changing world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — View of society: a rapidly changing, global society
55.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students, parents, community, employees, and the administration — children — world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to become productive, creative and caring individuals — to become responsible citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — survive to ensure — Creating — Recognizing — Providing — Maintaining — working together — to assure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: parents and school officials working together to ensure the development of a strong and effective partnership — Belief statement: all students can learn 	
56.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students — parents and school officials 				

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57.	everyone	to be life-long learners	empowers	Partnership: in partnership with our entire community	
58.	entire community — each student all students	empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of the future	to ensure — empower to provide	a quality education	
59.			culture — committed	An effective instructional program — A safe and orderly environment — An atmosphere which is conducive to learning — A motivated, committed and skilled staff	
60.	students — community — society	[graduates] who aspire to achieve and who are prepared to participate fully in a free and democratic society — Upon graduation, our students will be prepared to secure employment, continue their education, and adapt skillfully to a changing technological society. — They will learn to make contributions to the well-being of the community. — students will be expected to master a challenging set of academic standards — They will be taught to find and use information, speak and write effectively, make responsible decisions, and work to achieve personal goals. — Our students will learn to appreciate history, diversity and the achievements of humankind. — They will learn to make contributions to the well-being of the community.	to graduate students — prepare — expect		View of society: a changing technological society
61.	each student in (the city) — members of the community students	life-long learning	to provide	the best possible education	
62.			provide — meet or exceed	opportunities — quality educational services...that meet or exceed the needs of our customers — effective instruction in essential skills	
63.	Every _____ City Schools student	so that he/she may be a successful learner	effective instruction	in a safe and healthy environment	
64.	all...students		successfully educate		

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65.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students — students, the community, and the future work place — global demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — citizens who not only think but comprehend, not only learn but apply their knowledge, and who treasure their learning experiences — will develop academic skills as well as foster our students' belief in their own self-worth, their role as members of the community, and their responsibilities to themselves and others. — We will impart to our students the value and appreciation of lifelong learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Creating — pledges to be innovative — to develop — provide — keeps pace — cultivated — impart — meets — working together — to educate — Testing — commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — The learning and living environment cultivated within _____ Schools — a flexible educational system that meets the needs of the students, the community, and the future work place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: By working together — Belief statement: The success of our children depends on our success in implementing these goals. — View of society: increased global demands
66.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — [the city's] students — [for All] — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Learning — constructive participation in society 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Learning — systemwide educational opportunities whose measurable outcomes reflect "equity," "quality," and "excellence" — commitment to continuous school improvement — challenging, progressive educational opportunities and experiences that are responsive to the needs and talents of all students — the opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Belief statement: ALL students can learn — schools improve both collectively and one at a time
67.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to provide — responsive — to provide — committed to 		
68.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students regardless of family structure, income, gender, or ethnic origin — families, communities, and the world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to becoming confident and productive adults, enthusiastic lifelong learners, active and democratic participants in the members of their families, communities, and the world — academic success — to achieve full development of their potential through the acquisitions of values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are essential — to become active partners in our community's development with a global society 			
69.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students — global society 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to provide — strive to enrich the lives of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — educational programs — consistent with each individual's abilities and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: curricular, co-curricular, and community programs — View of society: a global society

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
70.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students, parents, guardians and the community — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — responsible citizens — our students will be empowered to live and work productively in the 21st century — Flexibility and resilience in adapting to a changing society — Use of technology to improve the quality of life and learning — Thinking, problem solving and decision making skills — Understanding of self and diversity within the community — Reading, writing and computational skills — Effective communication skills that promote and demonstrate integrity and decency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — pledge to prepare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: in cooperation with students, parents, guardians and the community — View of society: a changing society — 21st century: 21st century 	
71.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students — each student — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to be a productive, responsible and contributing member of a diverse multicultural society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — educate — recognizes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — recognizes the uniqueness and worth of all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — View of society: a diverse multicultural society
72.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — empowering them to become productive, responsible citizens — skills and knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to provide — empowering 		
73.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — every student — all students, parents, and community members — world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to succeed and to contribute to a better world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to prepare — strive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — an academically-challenging, safe, and nurturing environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: all students, parents, and community members are active participants
74.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — home and the community — each student — global society — children — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to become a self-sufficient, productive member of the global society prepared to enter the job market and/or continue his/her education — skills necessary for students to contribute to and benefit from a modern society — maximizing of their potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — provide — prepare — to provide — the teaching — committed to — maximizing — to provide — enable — encourage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — a relevant, quality education — through a world class education...committed to providing the curriculum, personnel, facilities, programs and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Partnership: in partnership with the home and the community — View of society: the global society — Belief statement: all children can and will learn — View of society: a modern society
75.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — all students — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to become successful, responsible contributors to society — all students to acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — to produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — the environment and resources that enable and encourage 	
77.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students — society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — students with a positive self-esteem, a knowledge and utilization of basic skills, and the physical ability to perform responsibly in today's society 			

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
78.	students — parents, families and the community-at-large	master the essential skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and reasoning — grow creatively, culturally and physically in order to become lifelong learners — learn to appreciate cultural diversity, become responsible citizens, and lead productive lives — learn and demonstrate skills needed for lifelong learning	to provide — to ensure — create — to ensure — to provide — pledge to prepare — continue — serve — PROMOTE — provide	high quality educational experiences so that our public schools are the choice of all (citizens in the city)	Partnership: parents, families and the community-at-large are involved in the activities of students
79.	all students				
80.	the young people of — — all students — citizens of this great city — society	to be self-sufficient and fulfilled citizens who are responsible and participating members of society		the best possible education for the young people of — — quest for excellence in education — EXCELLENCE!	Belief statement: Our children are indeed our future—the hope for a brighter tomorrow
81.	all students	lifelong success	PROMOTE — provide	a quality education	
82.	all students — PARENTS — EMPLOYEES — BUSINESS — CITIZENS	a more competitive workforce	pride — providing — strive to serve — communicating effectively — recognizing — working — cultivating — to involve — treating — to improve — to provide	customer oriented — leadership for quality schools — a safe and healthy environment — an education — recognizing (employees) as professionals and treating (them) with dignity and respect	Partnership: educating (citizens) help to improve our educational system and enhance our community working closely with them to involve (parents) in school activities
83.	all students	intellectual curiosity — positive personal qualities and well-being — respect for individual differences	to stimulate — develops — fosters — encourages — emphasizes — to meet — to ensure	programs to meet the educational needs of all students — high expectations for student achievement and behavior — a safe learning environment	Partnership: parental involvement
84.	all children of school age in — County and — City			the highest quality education appropriate to (the students') individual needs and abilities	
85.	home and community — each student	becomes a lifelong learner, an independent thinker, a responsible citizen.	to achieve	excellence in education	Partnership: through partnership with home and community

Coded Mission Number	Category 1 Language that Identifies Stakeholders	Category 2 Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Category 3 Language that Identifies Division Actions	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	Category 5 Emergent Categories
86.	all children	to become life-long learners	to ensure	a stable and safe environment in which to learn — caring and well-trained teachers — appropriate and adequate resources for the instruction and support for students to develop	Billed statements: all children have worth and can learn
87.	each student all students	realize his/her fullest potential in the utilization of talents, skills and intellect — the fundamental skills and processes essential for the lifelong acquisition of knowledge	to provide — accepts the responsibility — commitment	learning opportunities... which are compatible with the differing needs of individual learners — appropriate instruction — commitment to educational excellence and equity for all students	Billed statements: students differ in their rate of physical, mental, emotional and social development
88.	children	maximize the intellect and abilities of all of our students so they will: be prepared for a life of continuous learning; be happy; be fulfilled; and, at a minimum, be able to provide the basic necessities of life for themselves and their future families	to maximize		
67% (88/132) of Virginia school divisions had a mission statement.	99% (87/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified stakeholders.	86% (76/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified student outcomes.	99% (87/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified division actions.	77% (68/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified specific programs.	39% (34/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified partnerships with parents and/or community. 19% (17/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified beliefs statements. 24% (21/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified a view of society. 6% (5/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified the 21st century as a component of the mission.

Appendix D: Analysis of Stakeholders

(Note: The staff of a school division—including teachers, administrators, school board members, etc.—was assumed to be a stakeholder in the division since a mission statement articulates the purpose of the organization with which they are affiliated and charged with operating. Thus, any specific references to school division personnel were simply included incidentally in the analysis.)

Coded Mission Number	Students/children only	Students/children & parents only	Students/children, parents, & local community (e.g., county, city, or town) only	Students/children, parents, local community, & larger community (e.g., state, nation, or world)
1.			for everyone in the _____ County Public Schools	
2.				for all students — Parents, citizens, and children — the schools and the community — global society — all students — each student — society
3.				
4.			all students — students, staff, parents, and community	
5.				the home, the school and the community — each student — society — world
6.			we exist only for the students — every person who ventures into our school system's environment	
7.	students			
8.			The student is the reason this school division exists — School Board members, administrators, teachers, parents and students — our communities	
9.				21st-Century citizens — community and nation

Coded Mission Number	Students/children	Students/children & parents	Students/children, parents, & local community	Students/children, parents, local community, & larger community
10.	all students			
11.	all students			
12.		teachers, parents, administrators, and community persons, groups, and agencies students		
13.				all children — every student — society
14.		the total community.		
15.		each child		all students — individual, community, state, national, and global priorities and needs all students in ___ County — society
16.				
17.	all students			
18.		families, communities, business, and educators		
19.		all students		all students — society
20.		students, school personnel, parents, and community		
21.	all children	21st century citizens		
22.				all students — society
23.		all students		
24.		parental and community		all students, associates, the educational system, and society
25.				all students students, school personnel, parents, and community — society
26.				all students — parents, the community, and school personnel — the world NO STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED
27.	NO STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED	NO STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED	NO STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED	NO STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFIED

Coded Mission Number	Students/children	Students/children & parents	Students/children, parents, & local community	Students/children, parents, local community, & larger community
28.				
29.			Everyone's each child Students, staff members, parents, and volunteers are all valued participants in insuring success All members of the community share in a cooperative partnership	
30.				students, family, community and school personnel society all students world
31.				
32.			Everyone's	
33.				students, the community, the administration and employees world all children parents, teachers, and students America each student society
34.				
35.				
36.	each student			
37.	those who learn and those who teach			
38.	student			
39.				all students society
40.			ALL students in ___ County students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and the community all children parents and the community	
41.				
42.	all students			all students their communities
43.				
44.	students			
45.	all children			

Coded Mission Number	Students/children	Students/children & parents	Students/children, parents, & local community	Students/children, parents, local community, & larger community
46.				All students The citizens of _____ County, with the assistance of state and federal governments, are united in this effort
47.	all students			parents community
48.	each student			
49.				all students society all children
50.				parents, business, and industry community society
51.				students, parents, employees, residents, industry, and local merchants Virginia Department of Education
52.	ALL students			
53.				family and the community students society all students
54.				global society students, parents, community, employees, and the administration children world
55.				
56.	students parents and school officials			
57.			everyone's	
58.			entire community each student	
59.	all students			
60.				students community society
61.			each student in (the city) members of the community	

Coded Mission Number	Students/children	Students/children & parents	Students/children, parents, & local community	Students/children, parents, local community, & larger community
62.	students			
63.	Every ___ City Schools student			
64.	all...students			
65.				students students, the community, and the future work place
66.				global demands (the city of) students for All society
67.	all students			
68.				all students regardless of family structure, income, gender, or ethnic origin
69.				families, communities, and the world all students
70.				global society students, parents, guardians and the community
71.				society all students each student society
72.	all students			
73.				every student all students, parents, and community members
74.				world home and the community each student
75.				global society children society
76.				all students
77.				society students society
78.			students parents, families and the community-at-large	

Coded Mission Number	Students/children	Students/children & parents	Students/children, parents, & local community	Students/children, parents, local community, & larger community
79.	all students			the young people of --- all students citizens of this great city society
80.				
81.	all students			
82.			all students PARENTS EMPLOYEES BUSINESS CITIZENS	
83.	all students			
84.	all children of school age in --- County and --- City			
85.			home and community each student	
86.	all children			
87.	each student all students children			
88.				
99%	(27/88) of Virginia school divisions with a mission statement identified students only as stakeholders.	1% (1/88) of Virginia school divisions with a mission statement identified students and parents only as stakeholders.	23% (20/88) of Virginia school divisions with a mission statement identified students, parents, and local community as stakeholders.	44% (39/88) of Virginia school divisions with a mission statement identified students, parents, local community, and the larger community as stakeholders. <i>Breadth of scope:</i> 1% referred to state as highest level. 28% referred to national or societal as highest level. 15% referred to global as highest level. <i>Specific reference to state:</i> 3% made specific reference to the state as a stakeholder.

* The indefinite pronouns "everyone" and "all" were considered inclusive of the local communities since these references were preceeded by references to specific, local school divisions.

Appendix E: Analysis of Student Outcomes

Key to Student Outcome Categories

1. Citizenship: contributes to betterment of society and/or world; socially responsible; social development.
2. Ability to work with others: ability to work in groups; interpersonal skills.
3. Respect for individual differences: awareness/appreciation of cultural diversity.
4. Character: integrity; values.
5. Positive self-esteem: positive outlook; happiness; personal fulfillment; mental health; emotional development.
6. Habits of physical well-being: physical development.
7. Family skills: provide/care for future family.
8. Caring.
9. Environmental stewardship: care for the physical world.
10. Academic achievement: student learning; acquisition of certain/basic skills, knowledge, or behaviors; intellectual development.
11. Communication: reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening skills.
12. Mathematics: computational skills.
13. Technology/technological skills.
14. Preparedness for continuing education.
15. Lifelong learning: enabled to learn in the present and the future.
16. Economically productive: prepared for work/workforce.
17. Preparedness for future challenges: able to succeed; competent; able to handle change.
18. Fully developed potential.
19. Decision-making.
20. Problem-solving.
21. Higher-order thinking: independent thinking; critical thinking.
22. Creativity: artistic expression/appreciation.

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22

1.	Learning	•																					
2.	to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them to live, learn and work in an interdependent, global society — to become life-long learners who are prepared to meet the challenges of the interdependent, global society												•			•	•						
3.	given the tools to be a life-long learner, and taught to function effectively as a member of a group and as a productive member of society — each student will experience success Each student will be expected to succeed within the bounds of their abilities or chosen educational goals	•	•													•	•	•					
4.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
5.	<p>the development of individuals capable of functioning effectively in a constantly changing world</p> <p>the school experience should prepare students for life in the society which exists and provide them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve upon that society which currently exists</p> <p>students who complete their education in our school system should demonstrate skills, attitudes, and competencies in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verbal communication skills including reading, writing, speaking, and listening; • mathematical and computational skills including computer literacy; • life skills including family living, positive physical and mental health habits, and personal economic survival skills; • citizenship skills including honesty, integrity, fairness, positive moral and spiritual values and a commitment to our nation's heritage and traditions; • economic responsibility including preparation for employment and preparation for continuing education. We believe that all students must recognize that learning is a life-long process; • social and civic responsibility including a commitment to support societies [sic] institutions through service and stewardship of those resources entrusted to us and the nurturing of the human condition through personal relationships which reflect tolerance of and concern for others; • an awareness of our increasing interaction in a global society and the importance of international understanding; • cooperation and collaboration skills; • a range of problem solving skills and strategies with particular emphasis on higher order thinking skills and creativity; • an appreciation of the arts, both natural and man-made. 	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6.	learning is a [sic] essential lifelong function															•							
7.	<p>students will be able to make sound decisions in life</p> <p>improving student learning skills</p>										•										•		
8.	student learning will prepare students for diverse opportunities in our communities																	•					
9.	to develop 21st-Century citizens who can achieve full development of their potential and, as critical thinkers and lifelong learners, exhibit through their character and values a commitment to their community and nation, as well as a personal integrity which will enable them to meet the challenges of change	•			•											•		•		•			•
10.	intellectual, vocational, social and personal needs of all students	•				•					•						•						
11.	will allow for academic achievement, will help develop a positive outlook, and will foster respect for individual differences			•		•					•												

Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
12.	all graduates are prepared to directly enter and continue in the skilled workforce, or to enter and complete further academic and technical education																						
13.	positive nutritional habits for their life every student will and can become a contributing and productive member of an ever-changing society																						
14.	attain increasingly higher levels of academic achievement while providing for the social, physical and emotional growth to enable each individual to develop into a productive citizen prepared to enter the twenty-first century																						
15.	develop positive personal qualities and well-being, and foster respect for individuals																						
16.	learning how to learn the development and application of knowledge and skills intellectual curiosity and academic achievement an education that enables them to become informed and productive citizens in a democratic society																						
17.	success in future endeavors																						
18.	lifelong learning																						
19.	responsible productive citizens for the future all students to their highest level of academic performance																						
20.	positive development of their health, their attitudes and their behaviors each individual student may make a positive contribution to our democratic society																						
21.	21st century citizens achieve full development of their potential																						
22.	lifelong learning and critical thinking skills students to meet the challenges of change in real-life situations																						
23.	to master academic subjects																						
24.	all students will become life-long learners and responsible, productive members of school and society																						
25.	students enthusiasm for learning individual learning ability educational success and continuous improvement for all students																						
26.	all students to develop their full potential prepare students to meet the challenges of society																						
27.	a foundation of knowledge while nurturing lifelong learning and critical thinking skills																						

Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26.	well-rounded, productive citizens who are good stewards of the world they inhabit — prepare students to succeed in a multicultural and changing world — critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and technology skills	•	•	•						•						•	•	•			•	•	
27.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
28.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
29.	lifelong learning																						
30.	become productive citizens and contributing members of society	•														•							
31.	adapt and meet the challenges of a changing world																						
32.	Everyone Will Be a Successful Learner																						
33.	in order that they may develop specific skills, competencies and understanding necessary for success in a changing world																						
34.	preparing graduates for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment — will have been taught to think independently, act cooperatively, be aware of options in the future, and have been given the tools to compete anywhere with anyone in America — resulting in a competent, adaptable, and motivated citizenry	•	•																				
35.	becoming a productive member of society — each student is able to reach his or her fullest potential [prepared for] the future and for life-long learning																						
36.																							
37.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
38.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
39.	students to be responsible and productive citizens in an ever-changing society — each student in reaching his/her potential students become involved, responsible learners who reach their potential	•																					
40.	produce graduates with the necessary skills to enter the job market or to pursue higher education — success for all students and will build on their successes achieving success in school and life																						
41.																							

Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptions.)

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptions.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
42.	to become responsible, contributing citizens and life-long learners	•																					
43.	so that they develop the knowledge and skills to achieve success and become active citizens who contribute to their communities	•																					
44.	prepare students for post-secondary education and/or the workforce and to become life-long learners																						
	stimulates intellectual curiosity, fosters respect for individual differences																						
	emphasizes high expectations for students' achievement and behavior																						
45.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
46.	enable our students to fill worthy and diverse roles and accept opportunities in our community																						
	they will be motivated to fully utilize their talents, resources, and capabilities																						
47.	become life-long learners																						
48.	each student to develop his or her full learning potential																						
49.	informed and productive members of society																						
	all students acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to live																						
50.	to live successfully in the 21st Century																						
	an appreciation for the values of a democratic society that will improve the quality of life for all																						
51.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
52.	all students achieve their potential intellectually, socially, aesthetically, personally, and physically																						
53.	productive citizens																						
	to live full and useful lives and to work confidently and cooperatively through democratic institutions to improve the quality of life for all people																						
	critical thinking and problem solving skills																						
	responsible citizens																						
	those common values necessary for living and working together as responsible citizens in a democratic society																						
	students' intellectual, physical, social, moral, and ethical development consistent with the needs of productive citizens																						
	academic achievement																						
	strong positive self-concepts and generates interventions to ensure the continued personal growth of each student																						

Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
54.	to be productive, responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a rapidly changing, global society	•																					
55.	that they may develop specific skills, competencies, and understanding necessary for success in a changing world																						
56.	to become productive, creative and caring individuals	•																					
57.	to become responsible citizens to be life-long learners																						
58.	empowered with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of the future																						
59.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
60.	(graduates) who aspire to achieve and who are prepared to participate fully in a free and democratic society Upon graduation, our students will be prepared to secure employment, continue their education, and adapt skillfully to a changing technological society. They will learn to make contributions to the well-being of the community. students will be expected to master a challenging set of academic standards They will be taught to find and use information, speak and write effectively, make responsible decisions, and work to achieve personal goals. Our students will learn to appreciate history, diversity and the achievements of humankind. They will learn to make contributions to the well-being of the community. life-long learning	•																					
61.																							
62.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
63.	so that he/she may be a successful learner																						
64.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
65.	citizens who not only think but comprehend, not only learn but apply their knowledge, and who treasure their learning experiences will develop academic skills as well as foster our students' belief in their own self-worth, their role as members of the community, and their responsibilities to themselves and others. We will impart to our students the value and appreciation of lifelong learning.	•																					

Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
66.	LEARNING — constructive participation in society	•								•							•						
67.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
68.	to become confident and productive adults, enthusiastic lifelong learners, active and constructive participants in the democratic process, and contributing members of their families, communities, and the world — academic success — to achieve full development of their potential through the acquisition of values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are essential to become active partners in our community's development with a global society	•	•		•				•						•	•			•				
69.	responsible citizens																						
70.	our students will be empowered to live and work productively in the 21st century Flexibility and resilience in adapting to a changing society Use of technology to improve the quality of life and learning Thinking, problem solving and decision making skills Understanding of self and diversity within the community Reading, writing and computational skills Effective communication skills that promote and demonstrate integrity and decency to be a productive, responsible and contributing member of a diverse multicultural society empowering them to become productive, responsible citizens skills and knowledge to succeed and to contribute to a better world	•		•	•	•					•	•	•							•	•	•	
71.																							
72.		•															•						
73.		•								•													
74.	to become a self-sufficient, productive member of the global society prepared to enter the job market and/or continue his/her education skills necessary for students to contribute to and benefit from a modern society — maximizing of their potential all students to acquire the knowledge, skills and values necessary to become successful, responsible contributors to society students with a positive self-esteem, a knowledge and utilization of basic skills, and the physical ability to perform responsibly in today's society	•																					
75.																							
76.		•																					
77.		•								•													

Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)

Coded Mission	Language that Identifies Student Outcomes	Student Outcome Categories (Refer to key for descriptors.)																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
78.	master the essential skills of reading, writing, mathematics, and reasoning — grow creatively, culturally and physically in order to become life-long learners — learn to appreciate cultural diversity, become responsible citizens, and lead productive lives learn and demonstrate skills needed for lifelong learning	•		•			•				•				•							•	
79.	to be self-sufficient and fulfilled citizens who are responsible and participating members of society	•				•																	
80.	lifelong success																						
81.	a more competitive workforce																						
82.	intellectual curiosity																						
83.	positive personal qualities and well-being — respect for individual differences			•		•									•								
84.	NO STUDENT OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED																						
85.	becomes a lifelong learner, an independent thinker, a responsible citizen.	•																					
86.	to become life-long learners																						
87.	realize his/her fullest potential in the utilization of talents, skills and intellect																						
88.	the fundamental skills and processes essential for the lifelong acquisition of knowledge maximize the intellect and abilities of all of our students so they will: be prepared for a life of continuous learning; be happy; be fulfilled; and, at a minimum, be able to provide the basic necessities of life for themselves and their future families									•													
	86% (76/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified student outcomes.	42 % (37/ 88)	6 % (5/ 88)	11 % (10/ 88)	8 % (7/ 88)	18 % (16/ 88)	10 % (9/ 88)	3 % (3/ 88)	1 % (1/ 88)	2 % (2/ 88)	31 % (27/ 88)	6 % (5/ 88)	3 % (4/ 88)	7 % (6/ 88)	33 % (29/ 88)	35 % (31/ 88)	36 % (32/ 88)	17 % (15/ 88)	3 % (3/ 88)	5 % (4/ 88)	14 % (12/ 88)	5 % (4/ 88)	

Appendix F: Analysis of Division Actions by Synonym Sets

Key to Division Actions Categories

Degrees of Achievement or Commitment

1. Achieve/Meet
2. Demonstrate
3. Acknowledge/Recognize/Give attention/Value
4. Promote/Advance/Emphasize
5. Expect/Require/Uphold
6. Improve/Increase/Enrich/Exceed/Maximize
7. Strive/Seek
8. Assure/Ensure
9. Commit/Pledge
10. Be accountable/Be responsible

Means of Educating

18. Serve
19. Assist/Guide
20. Nurture/Cultivate/Foster/Care
21. Encourage/Motivate/Stimulate/Engage
22. Teach/Educate/Instruct/Impart/Instill

Outcomes of Educating

23. Empower/Enable
24. Prepare
25. Produce/Graduate

Systems and Programs

11. Create/Develop/Establish
12. Operate/Use/Implement/Work
13. Provide/Offer
14. Maintain/Sustain/Support/Secure/Continue/
Retain/Fund
15. Respond/Keep pace
16. Evaluate
17. Revise

Working in Cooperation

26. Communicate
27. Involve/Enlist/Recruit
28. Share/Work together
29. Respect/Treat

Coded Mission Number	Language that Identifies Division Actions	Degrees of Achievement or Commitment									Systems or Programs						Means of Educating				Outcomes of Ed.			Partnerships				
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.

1.	Teaching — Caring																				•		•													
2.	provide — educate students — to serve — involves — fosters — improves							•																												
3.	provide — broad																																			•
4.	to provide																																			
5.	to promote, fund, implement, and evaluate programs and services consistent with these beliefs and values — shared — prepare																																			
6.	We are committed to success...and we will settle for nothing less																																			
7.	committed to — providing — improving — nurturing																																			
8.	prepare — be accountable																																			
9.	to provide																																			
10.	meeting																																			
11.	to provide — to meet																																			

Coded Mission Number	Language that Identifies Division Actions	Degree of Achievement or Commitment										Systems or Programs							Means of Educating					Outcomes of Ed.				Partnerships								
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.						
12.	to ensure																																			
13.	to provide							•																												
14.	to ensure to involve provides commitment enable																																			
15.	to provide to meet respond to stimulate to ensure		•												•																					
16.																																				
17.	to provide ensures																																			
18.	providing																																			
19.	to educate fostering																																			
20.	to provide nurture prepare																																			
21.	to provide promotes																																			
22.	to provide																																			

Coded Mission Number	Degrees of Achievement or Commitment										Systems or Programs					Means of Educating					Outcomes of Ed.					Partnerships				
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	
34.	•						•	•																						
35.																														
36.																														
37.																														
38.																														
39.																														

Coded Mission Number	Language that Identifies Division Actions	Degrees of Achievement or Commitment								Systems or Programs								Means of Educating				Outcomes of Ed.				Partnerships				
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.
53.	to prepare students																													
	— Sustaining																													
	— Creating																													
	— Securing																													
	— Teaching																													
	— Maintaining																													
	— Ensuring																													
	Recognizing the differing needs and interests of individual students and providing			•			•						•																	
	— Insilling in each student			•																										
	— Fostering																													
	— Promotes																													
	— valued, acknowledged, and advanced																													
	— educate																													
54.	— commitment																													
55.	provide																													
56.	— to serve																													
	— to ensure																													
	— Creating																													
	— Recognizing																													
	— Providing																													
	— Maintaining																													
	— working together																													
	— to ensure																													
57.	empowers																													
58.	to ensure																													
	empower																													

Coded Mission Number	Language that Identifies Division Actions	Degrees of Achievement or Commitment									Systems or Programs									Means of Educating									Outcomes of Ed.				Partnerships																						
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.																									
71.	educate																																																						
72.	recognizes to provide																																																						
73.	empowering to prepare																																																						
74.	active provide																																																						
75.	prepare to provide																																																						
76.	the teaching committed to maximizing to provide																																																						
77.	enable encourage to produce																																																						
78.	to provide																																																						
79.	to ensure create																																																						
80.	to ensure to provide																																																						
81.	pledge to prepare continue active PROMOTE provide																																																						

Coded Mission Number	Degrees of Achievement or Commitment										Systems or Programs					Means of Educating					Outcomes of Ed.			Partnerships					
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.
99%	14	2	7	11	5	10	8	17	13	6	10	5	58	13	3	1	6	3	18	11	15	7	17	3	2	5	5	5	5
(87/88) of Va. school divisions with a mission statement identified division actions	12/88	2/88	6/88	10/88	4/88	9/88	7/88	15/88	11/88	5/88	9/88	4/88	51/88	11/88	3/88	1/88	5/88	16/88	10/88	13/88	6/88	15/88	3/88	2/88	4/88	4/88	4/88	4/88	4/88

Appendix G: Analysis of Specific Programs

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational or Instructional Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Admin-istration and Management
1.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
2.	— educational opportunity — the development of academic programs and facilities that will enable the schools — a high quality, comprehensive and meaningful education	•			•			
3.	— Each student will be treated as an individual — a quality of education	•	•					
4.		•						
5.	— each student must assume major responsibility for his/her own development		•					
6.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
7.	— a positive, nurturing, and success-oriented environment — a quality education	•			•			
8.	— the principal must be the visionary leader in improving student learning and must assume an active, supportive role in the level of classroom instruction. — The teacher must assume a personal responsibility for the education of each student. — The level of student achievement is directly related to the level of teacher expectations.			•				
9.	— a nationally recognized educational program and staff	•					•	
10.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
11.	— educational programs to meet the identified needs of all students in a learning environment — students are transported safely to well-maintained facilities	•	•		•			
12.	— students are exposed to the highest quality personnel				•	•		

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Administration and Management
13.	opportunities and resources to ensure that individual students are challenged	•	•			•		
14.	an educational process which puts the needs of each child at the forefront and provides the necessary resources and structures	•	•			•		
15.	The foundation of the school system shall be a strong educational program — programs and services to meet equitably the educational needs of all students through safe learning environments that stimulate	•	•		•	•		
16.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
17.	an appropriate education in an environment that ensures success in the classroom	•			•			
18.	through an individualized/relevant curriculum and instructional program — a safe/healthy environment	•	•		•			
19.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
20.	an educational program and staff	•					•	
21.	adequate opportunity — a safe and disciplined environment which promotes the development of the whole child	•	•		•			
22.	a secure learning environment in which all students will be encouraged to develop their unique abilities and potentials	•	•		•			
23.	an excellent education — the highest quality, most cost-effective education possible — excellent personnel — an inviting environment — continual data analysis — curriculum renewal — a meaningful staff development program — current technology — efficient operating procedures	•				•	•	•
24.	opportunities for	•						
25.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
26.	a safe environment				•			

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Administration and Management
27.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
28.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
29.	Schools are nurturing centers the well being, growth and development of each child in a caring environment and challenging educational programs in which all students can learn, grow.		•		•			
30.	all students participate in quality learning experiences necessary to grow	•	•		•			
31.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
32.	a results-oriented, dynamic school system which is sensitive to the needs of students, the community, the administration and employees		•				•	•
33.	world-class standards in English, mathematics, science, history, and geography							
34.	a well-rounded instructional program which fosters excellence in learning and excellence in teaching	•		•			•	•
35.	it is the responsibility of the Board of Education to provide the appropriate leadership to the school district and faculty to assure that these functions effectively occur for all children in the environment where							
36.	an atmosphere of encouragement, respect, and academic challenge	•			•			
37.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
38.	education for all within a community which respects, supports, and encourages those who learn and those who teach				•		•	
39.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
39.	a quality educational program	•						

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Admin-istration and Management
40.	<p>the best possible education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — a program of quality instruction — Students will have sufficient time on task and the opportunity to learn through a variety of methods suited to their individual needs — a fair grading system — a personalized environment that promotes students' self-esteem — a safe, drug and alcohol-free environment in which learning can take place — For our STAFF MEMBERS, we will provide a high quality of working life. We will establish and maintain equitable salaries and favorable working conditions for teachers and other employees. To develop each employee's potential, we will offer a variety of professional growth activities. To nurture a collegial climate, we will offer staff development in consensus-building, accountability, creativity, problem-solving, and participatory decision-making. To facilitate open channels of communication, we will operate a network of advisory committees at the building and division levels. — For the PARENTS and other CITIZENS of <u> </u> County, we will demonstrate our consciousness by maintaining the level of expenditures within the constraints of the approved budget, while seeking ways in which business and industry can financially endorse public education. We will communicate with parents through frequent and varied reports concerning student accomplishments. We will promote community involvement in the schools through high quality communication, volunteer programs, parent education, advisory committees, publications, support of PTA/PTO, and the Adopt-A-School program. We will maintain clean, attractive schools and a safe, efficient transportation system. 							

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Administration and Management
41.	effective instructional programs, facilities, and services which assist and support students in meaningful learning experiences	•			•	•		
42.		•						
43.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
44.	a safe and secure learning environment	•			•			
45.	a safe, supportive, and challenging environment where all children learn — the necessary trained and dedicated leadership, qualified personnel, equipment and materials to assure an appropriate education for every student, regardless of race, color, sex, physical condition, or national origin — Treat all personnel equally with the highest degree of respect — Appropriate funds fairly and equally — Give attention to schools that have been neglected over a period of years to assure that the property and quality of equipment of said schools may be upgraded, and repaired in order to be comparable to the best schools in the Division — students will be provided with programs and activities so that The principal must be the visionary educational leader in improving student learning and must assume an active, supportive role in providing classroom instruction. — The teacher must assume a personal responsibility for the education of each student. Student achievement is directly related to the expectations of the teacher. — The students must realize that self-discipline is essential for achievement.	•	•		•	•	•	•
46.	a quality education in a challenging learning environment	•						
47.	an exemplary public school system	•						
48.	an instructional program that provides the opportunities and resources for	•				•		

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Administration and Management
49.	dynamic environment for learning through which	•			•			
50.	a conducive learning environment — a strong program of evaluation including academic achievement and other outcome indicators associated with student success	•			•			•
51.	the improvement of instruction in a positive manner — a welcome climate for students, parents, and employees				•		•	•
52.	a climate in which				•			
53.	The _____ County Public Schools are places where students receive a quality education in an environment which promotes individual growth and initiative — a school climate — a well qualified school staff whose role, central to the education of the children, is recognized and respected, and whose productive service will be acknowledged through continued support, fair compensation, and appreciation — a curriculum of comprehensive studies in the elementary schools with increasing differentiation occurring in the middle and high schools to accommodate diverse personal and vocational interests — a physical and social environment which is conducive to the learning process — the learning environment is one which gives students ample opportunity to develop — appropriate topics of study and instructional activities which will enhance and stimulate each student's growth and development — a broader understanding and appreciation of the school system in the community and stimulating closer links among teachers, students, and parents	•	•	•	•		•	
54.	commitment to excellence and equity	•						
55.	a dynamic school system	•						

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Administration and Management
56.	a safe, secure and nurturing environment — learning opportunities for parents and students through extensive tutorial services, child care, and parent workshops — high personal and professional expectations for ourselves, students and parents <i>NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED</i>	•		•	•		•	
57.	<i>NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED</i>							
58.	<i>NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED</i>							
59.	a quality education — An effective instructional program — A safe and orderly environment — An atmosphere which is conducive to learning — A motivated, committed and skilled staff <i>NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED</i>	•			•		•	
60.	<i>NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED</i>							
61.	the best possible education — opportunities — quality educational services...that meet or exceed the needs of our customers — effective instruction in essential skills — in a safe and healthy environment	•						
62.		•						
63.		•						
64.								
65.	The learning and living environment cultivated within — Schools — a flexible educational system that meets the needs of the students, the community, and the future work place — systemwide educational opportunities whose measurable outcomes reflect "equity," "quality," and "excellence" — commitment to continuous school improvement — challenging, progressive educational opportunities and experiences that are responsive to the needs and talents of all students — the opportunity	•			•			
66.		•						•
67.		•						
68.		•						
69.	educational programs — consistent with each individual's abilities and needs	•						

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Admin-istration and Management
70.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
71.	recognizes the uniqueness and words of all students		•					
72.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
73.	an academically-challenging, safe, and nurturing environment	•			•			
74.	a relevant, quality education	•						
75.	through a world class education...committed to providing the curriculum, personnel, facilities, programs and activities	•			•		•	
76.	the environment and resources that enable and encourage				•	•		
77.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
78.	high quality educational experiences so that our public schools are the choice of all (citizens in the city)	•						
79.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
80.	The best possible education for the young people of _____	•						
81.	quest for excellence in education EXCELLENCE a quality education	•						
82.	customer oriented leadership for quality schools a safe and healthy environment an education recognizing (employees) as professionals and treating (them) with dignity and respect programs to meet the educational needs of all students	•			•		•	•
83.	high expectations for student achievement and behavior a safe learning environment the highest quality education appropriate to (the students') individual needs and abilities excellence in education	•	•		•			
84.		•	•					
85.		•						
86.	a stable and safe environment in which to learn caring and well-trained teachers appropriate and adequate resources				•	•	•	

Coded Mission Number	Category 4 Language that Identifies Specific Programs	General Educational Programs or Opportunities	Educational Philosophies	Specific Educational Policies	Facilities or School Environment	Services or Resources	Staff	Administration and Management
87.	the instruction and support for students to develop — learning opportunities... which are compatible with the differing needs of individual learners — appropriate instruction — commitment to educational excellence and equity for all students	•	•			•		
88.	NO PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED							
67% (88/132) of Virginia school divisions had a mission statement.	77% (68/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified specific programs.	63% (55/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified general educational programs.	31% (27/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified educational philosophies.	7% (6/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified specific educational policies.	40% (35/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified facilities or school environment.	14% (11/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified services or resources.	17% (15/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified staff.	10% (9/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified administration and management.

Appendix H: Analysis of Emergent Categories

Coded Mission Number	Partnerships	Belief Statements	View of Society	Reference to 21st Century
1.				
2.	<p>combined efforts of the schools and the community</p> <p>Parents, citizens, and children will share</p> <p>involve all the community in a manner which draws strength from its diversity</p> <p>These programs will involve all the community in a manner which...fosters mutual respect and improves our society</p> <p>the schools to serve as a center for the life of the community</p>		interdependent, global society	
3.				
4.				
5.			constantly changing world	
6.				
7.		schools and school systems are a locality's gateway to the future		
8.	Parents must actively participate in the education of their child.	Student learning is our first priority		21st-Century
9.		All students are capable of learning.		
10.				
11.				
12.	through collaboration of teachers, parents, administrators, and community persons, groups, and agencies		ever-changing society	twenty-first century
13.		all children can learn.		
14.	involve the total community in a commitment to an educational process			
15.	The development and implementation of the school division's programs and services shall include community participation and respond to individual, community, state, national, and global priorities and needs			
16.			a democratic society	
17.		all students can learn		

Coded Mission	Partnerships	Belief Statements	View of Society	Reference to 21st Century
18.			our democratic society	
19.				21st century
20.	shared responsibility and cooperation by students, school personnel, parents, and community			
21.				
22.				
23.	parental and community support and involvement			
24.				
25.	a shared responsibility by students, school personnel, parents, and community in partnership with parents, the community, and school personnel		challenges of society	
26.		all students have the right to learn	multicultural and changing world	
27.		individuals are unique		
28.				
29.	Students, staff members, parents, and volunteers are all valued participants in insuring success All members of the community share in a cooperative partnership to meet the challenges of the future			
30.	mutual responsibility of students, family, community and school personnel		a changing world	
31.				
32.				
33.			a changing world	
34.	Together with parents, teachers, and students	teaching and learning are the two most important functions that occur in our schools		
35.		each student is a unique individual		
36.				
37.				
38.	staff involvement and parental community cooperation			
39.			an ever-changing society	
40.	an atmosphere marked by mutual trust, fairness, warmth, and personalization among students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and the community			
41.	with parents and the community	all children can learn		
42.				

Coded Mission	Partnerships	Belief Statements	View of Society	Reference to 21st Century
43.				
44.	encourages parental involvement			
45.				
46.	Parents must actively participate in the education of their children. — Community support and interest are achieved as the community becomes informed and involved in the programs, activities and mission of the school division.	All students are capable of learning.		
47.				
48.				
49.				
50.	supportive school and community relationships (e.g., parents, business, and industry) by providing an effective means of communication including access and input into the educational process through a variety of school/community inter-action programs	— County Public Schools believe in the worth and dignity of all children and that they are entitled to a World Class Education — all children can learn	a democratic society	21st Century
51.	a team setting where the team shall include students, parents, employees, residents, industry, and local merchants			
52.				
53.	The staff works with the family and the community		a democratic society	
54.			a rapidly changing, global society	
55.	sensitive to the needs of students, parents, community, employees, and the administration		a changing world	
56.	parents and school officials working together to ensure the development of a strong and effective partnership	all students can learn		
57.				
58.	n partnership with our entire community			
59.				
60.			a changing technological society	
61.				
62.				
63.				
64.				
65.	By working together	The success of our children depends on our success in implementing these goals.	increased global demands	

Coded Mission	Partnerships	Belief Statements	View of Society	Reference to 21st Century
66.		All students can learn — schools improve both collectively and one at a time		
67.				
68.				
69.	curricular, co-curricular, and community programs		a global society	
70.	in cooperation with students, parents, guardians and the community		a changing society	21st century
71.			a diverse multicultural society	
72.				
73.	all students, parents, and community members are active participants			
74.	in partnership with the home and the community		the global society	
75.		all children can and will learn	a modern society	
76.				
77.				
78.	parents, families and the community-at-large are involved in the activities of students			
79.				
80.		Our children are indeed our future—the hope for a brighter tomorrow		
81.				
82.	enlisting [citizens'] help to improve our educational system and enhance our community			
	— working closely with them			
	— to involve [parents] in school activities			
83.	parental involvement			
84.				
85.	through partnership with home and community			
86.		all children have worth and can learn		
87.		students differ in their rate of physical, mental, emotional and social development		
88.				

Coded Mission	Partnerships	Belief Statements	View of Society	Reference to 21st Century
<p>67% (88/132) of Virginia school divisions had a mission statement.</p>	<p>39% (34/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified partnerships with parents and/or community.</p>	<p>19% (17/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified belief statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11% (10/88) identified that all students can learn. 3% (3/88) indicated that individuals are unique and have differing needs. 2% (2/88) indicated that either schools or children are the gateway or hope for the future. 2% (2/88) indicated that all students have a right to learn. 2% (2/88) indicated that all individuals have worth. 2% (2/88) indicated that teaching and learning are the most important parts of schooling. 1% (1/88) indicated that the success of children depends on the school division. 1% (1/88) indicated that schools improve both collectively and one at a time. 	<p>24% (21/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified a view of society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11% (10/88) identified a changing society. 6% (5/88) identified an interdependent or global society. 5% (4/88) identified a democratic society. 2% (2/88) identified a multicultural society. 1% (1/88) identified a challenging society. 1% (1/88) identified a technological society. 1% (1/88) identified a modern society. 	<p>6% (3/88) of Virginia division-level mission statements contained language that identified the 21st century as a component of the mission.</p>

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