

Virginia's Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy

**State Special Education Advisory Committee
December 2011**

**Virginia Department of Education
Division of Special Education and Student Services
Doug Cox, Assistant Superintendent**

Objectives

- Share Virginia's approach to developing and implementing an Aspiring Special Education Leaders Academy.
- Share lessons learned and potential next steps.
- Obtain additional ideas through questions and feedback.



To influence positive outcomes for Virginia's children and youth with disabilities by helping to identify and prepare potential leaders for future administrative positions in special education and by assisting school divisions with succession planning.

About Virginia

- Number of School Divisions: 132
- Number of VDOE Regions: 8
- Total Student Enrollment: 1,253,038
- Students with Disabilities: 163,500



Strategic Partners



- NASDSE
- Higher Education
- Virginia Council of Administrators of Special Education (VCASE)
- School Division Superintendents

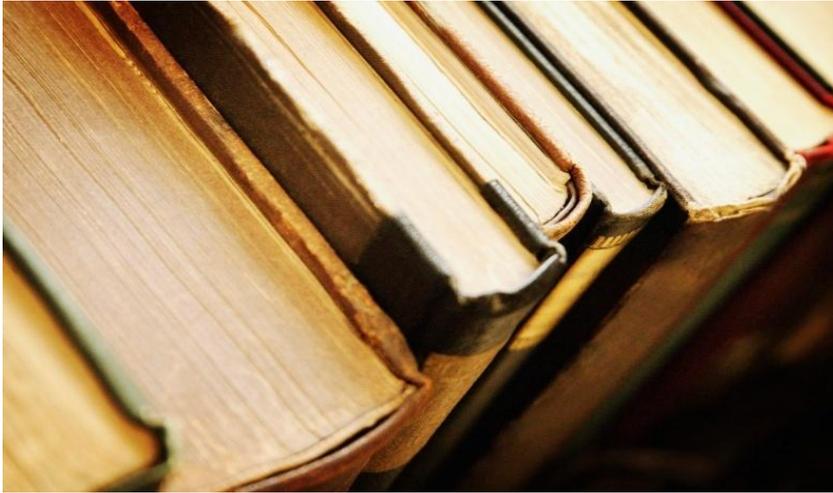
MORE BACKGROUND DETAILS

- Established in 2008; year-long program
- For selected participants from school divisions and state-operated programs
- Funding
 - ✓ VDOE funds presenters, hotel costs, & meals
 - ✓ School Divisions and State Programs fund mileage reimbursement and teacher substitutes

Cohort Selection Process

- Memorandum and Nomination Packet to Division Superintendents
- Application Sign-off by Division Superintendent or Designee & Special Education Director
- Application review and selection by steering committee and/or VDOE staff; rubric used

Learning Experiences Based Upon Standards

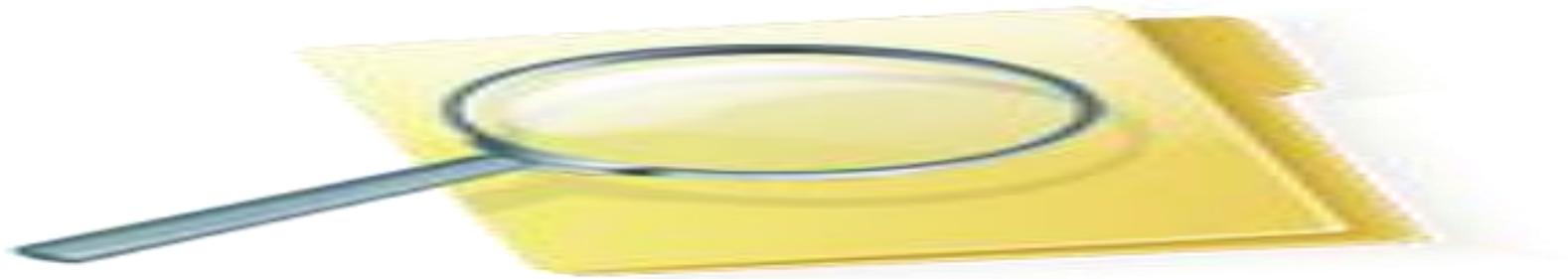


- Standards for Special Education Administrators (CEC, 2008)
- National Educational Leadership Policy Standards adopted by the Policy Board for Educational Administration Interstate Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) in 2007

Competencies Aligned with Standards

- Competencies identified by Virginia special education directors and Academy Steering Committee members





Six Areas of Focus

1. Leading Self
2. Leading Others
3. Leading Learning
4. Leading Implementation of Policies, Laws, and Regulations
5. Managing Operations and Resources
6. Leading Results

FOCUS: LEADING SELF	RELATED STANDARDS	
<i>Academy participants will engage in professional learning activities designed to assist them in beginning to:</i>	*CEC	**ISLLC
Leadership and Policy		
Understand own leadership strengths & areas for growth; articulate own style of leadership	1	5
Understand and employ effective decision making skills	1	5
Understand the importance of reframing or using multiple perspectives to think about the same situation in more than one way	1	5
Professional Development & Ethical Practice		

Yearly Calendar of Learning Experiences



- Initial three-day workshop (August)
- Two-day Monthly Seminars (except January & April)
- Three-day wrap-up (August)

Self Assessments

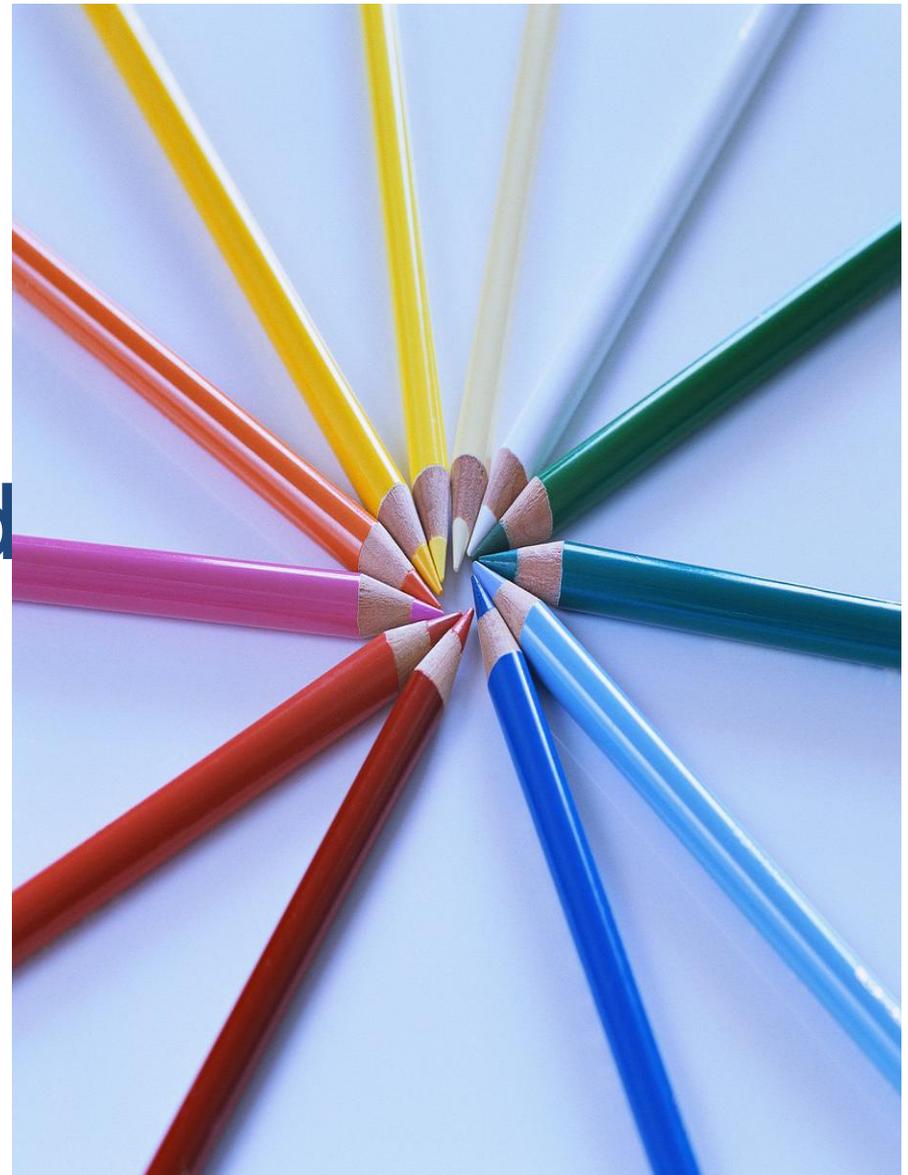
- StrengthsFinder™ (Gallup)
- Change Style Indicator™ (Discovery Learning)
- Influence Style Indicator™ (Discovery Learning)



Collaboration

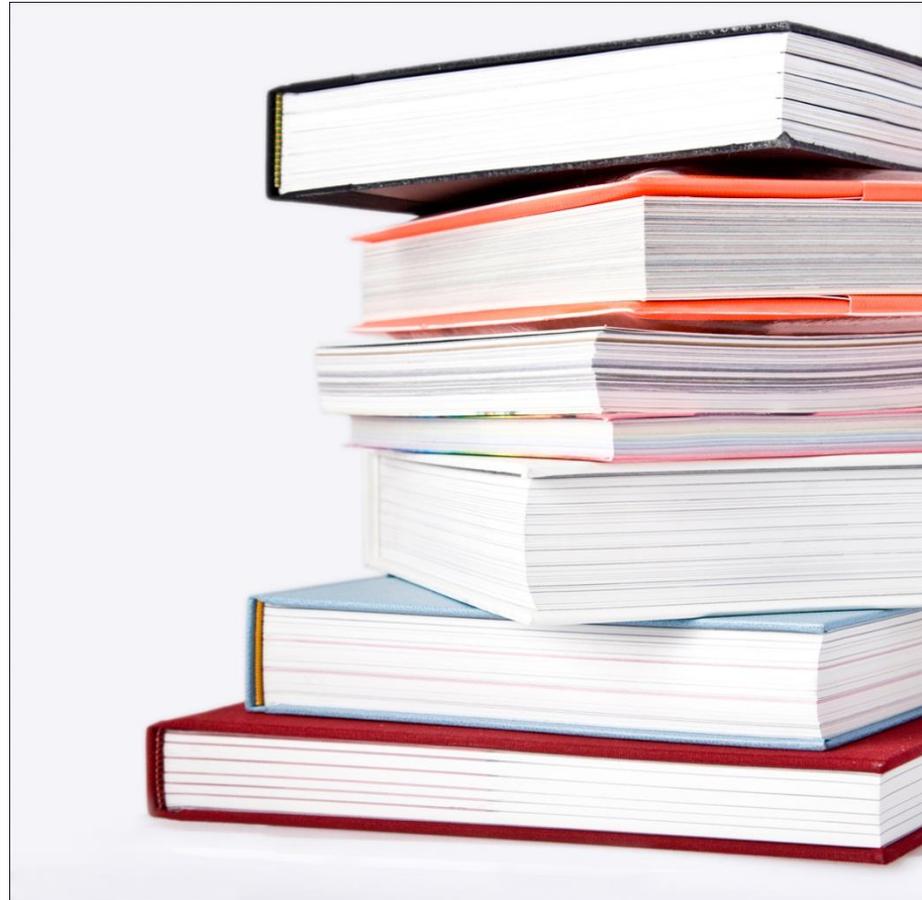
Strengths-based
Teams

Team
Presentations



Reading

Professional Books & Follow-up Discussions



Observations

State Board of Education

State Special Education
Advisory Committee

General Assembly Committees



Interviews

Panels of Parents

Panels of Local
Special Education
Directors

“Leadership Live”



Agency Visits

- Council for Exceptional Children, Committee for Education Funding, National Center on RTI, NASDSE, National Association of School Psychologists, National Disability Rights Network, NICHCY, OSEP, & RTI Action Network



Time for Reflection

Reflective
Journaling

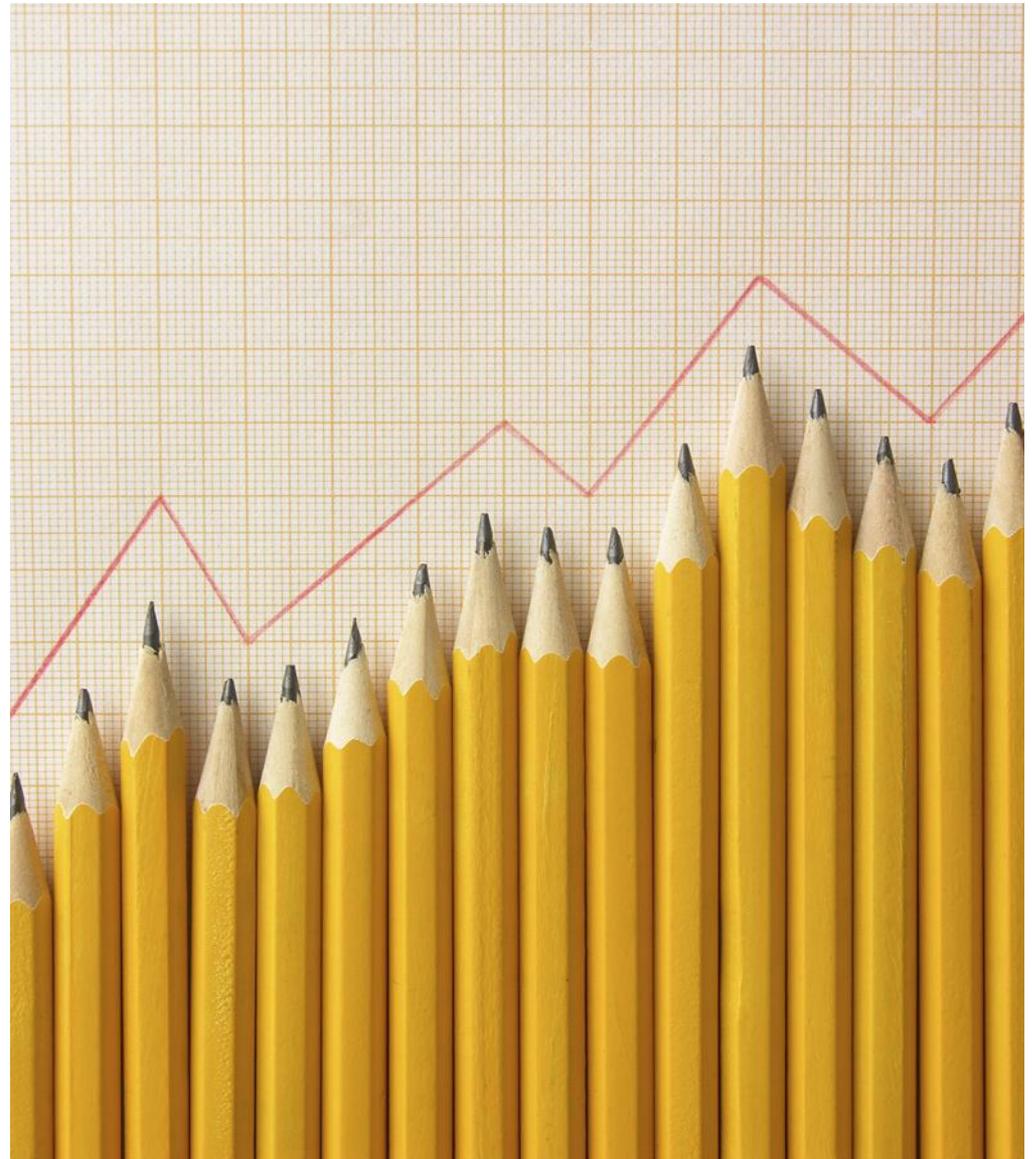


Additional Learning Experiences

- Monthly Seminars with VDOE Presenters & Consultants
- Conference Participation
- Internships (January & summer)
- Peer coaching



Monitoring Academy Outcomes



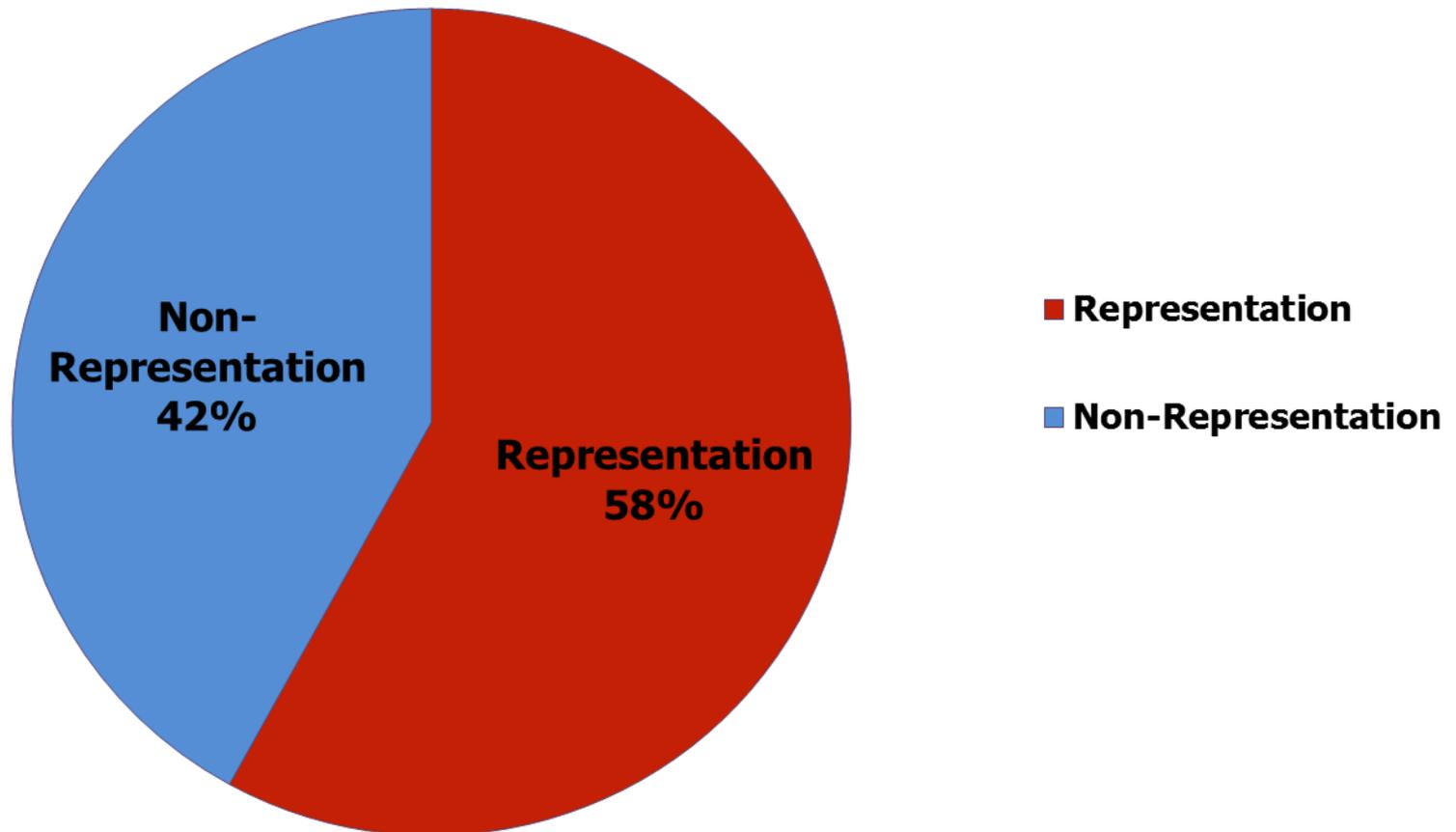
Membership & Academy Completion

Cohorts	Years	Members	Withdrew	Graduates	%
One	2008-2009	30	1	29	96.7%
Two	2009-2010	31	1	30	96.8%
Three	2010-2011	31	2	29	93.5%
Total	3 Years	92	4	88	95.6%
Four	2011-2012	30	0	N/A	N/A

School Division Participation

Regions	# Divisions in Region	# Participating Divisions	% Participating Divisions
1	15	11	80%
2	15	9	56%
3	17	9	53%
4	19	15	79%
5	20	11	55%
6	15	10	67%
7	19	6	32%
8	12	6	50%
Total	132	77	58%

School Division Academy Representation



Cohort Member Promotions

Cohorts	Graduates	Promotions	%
Cohort 1 2008-2009	29	9 <i>Includes 4 Directors</i>	31 %
Cohort 2 2009-2010	30	8 <i>Includes 2 Directors</i>	26.7%
Cohort 3 2010-2011	29	7	24.1%
Total	88	24	27.2%

Qualitative Data

- Written responses to three questions:
 - Would you recommend the academy to a colleague? Why or why not?
 - What changes do you recommend in the program for the next cohort?
 - What features/experiences should remain the same?



Additional Outcomes

- Acceptance into Doctoral Programs
- Feedback after seminars & internships
- Selected learning experiences replicated in some divisions
- Continuing relationships following year-long program



One More Outcome

Academy has become a “testing ground”; selected features adopted to expand support for newly-appointed directors.



Academy Changes Made

- Modified monthly schedule from one day seminars to minimum of two days
- Expanded meeting locations to southwestern region
- Obtained approval for *option* of 3 to 6 hours of graduate credit at George Mason University
- Held follow-up seminar for cohorts I and II graduates in 2011; will reconvene in 2012 with all cohort graduates invited

Next Steps

- Expanding representation of school divisions
- Formally surveying “graduates” to identify:
 - ✓ Additional perceptions re value of academy learning experiences
 - ✓ How learning experiences have been applied
 - ✓ Additional changes in positions and/or areas of responsibility since academy enrollment



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