

# **DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM: EVALUATION READINESS REPORT**

**VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment  
2512 George Mason Drive  
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

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# **DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM: EVALUATION READINESS REPORT**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this Evaluation Readiness Report is to comply with School Board Policy 6-26, adopted by the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach on September 5, 2007. According to the policy, “Existing programs will be evaluated based on an annual Program Evaluation Schedule which will be developed by the Program Evaluation Committee and approved by the School Board annually.” On September 1, 2009, the School Board approved the 2009-2010 Program Evaluation Schedule, in which the Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) Distance Learning Program was recommended for an Evaluation Readiness Report. Based on School Board Policy 6-26, for programs scheduled for an Evaluation Readiness Report, the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment will “assist program staff in defining measurable goals and objectives, as well as linkages with activities and outcomes.” According to the policy, an Evaluation Readiness Report focusing on the outcomes of this process and recommendations regarding continued evaluation of the programs will be presented to the Superintendent and School Board.

## **RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION READINESS PROCESS**

- A committee of representatives from departments involved in overseeing the Distance Learning Program and program evaluation staff met to develop goals and measurable objectives and discussed the Comprehensive Evaluation Plan for 2010-2011.
- The first goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Ensure equity in course offerings for VBCPS students.” One measurable objective was defined based on this goal and focused on distance learning course requests and enrollments.
- The second goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Serve as a viable medium to offer otherwise unavailable educational opportunities to VBCPS students.” Multiple measurable objectives were derived based on this goal and focused on educational opportunities provided to students at each level (elementary, middle, and high) and student, teacher, administrator, and parent perceptions of program quality.
- The third goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Support the school division’s efforts to utilize instructional staff efficiently.” One measurable objective was based on this goal and focused on staffing allocations and the impact on teachers’ employment status (full- and part-time employment).

- The fourth goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Provide Distance Learning Program staff with effective training and support in order to offer quality instruction to VBCPS students.” Multiple measurable objectives were derived based on this goal and focused on the quality of training received.
- The fifth goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Ensure that students gain the same or similar learning outcomes in distance learning courses as compared to students receiving instruction in a traditional setting.” “Multiple measurable objectives were derived based on this goal and focused on the student learning outcomes based on grades and student, teacher, administrator, and parent perceptions of program quality.
- The sixth goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Act as a viable alternate delivery option for administrative and training opportunities for VBCPS staff.” One measurable objective was defined based on this goal and focused on teacher and administrator perceptions of program quality.
- A proposed evaluation plan for the Distance Learning Program was developed. This plan included the evaluation questions that would be the focus of the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for 2010-2011 and the planned data collection process for evaluating the program goals and objectives.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The information garnered from the Distance Learning Program evaluation readiness process led to the formulation of the following recommendation. A rationale is also presented for the recommendation.

*Recommendation 1:* Conduct a comprehensive evaluation during the 2010-2011 school year, focused on program implementation, student academic outcomes, and stakeholders’ perceptions of program quality. (Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment)

*Rationale:* It is proposed that a comprehensive evaluation of the Distance Learning Program be conducted during the 2010-2011 school year, which focuses on evaluating implementation-related issues, student outcomes, and stakeholders’ perceptions. A comprehensive evaluation has not been conducted for the Distance Learning Program since its inception during the 1998-1999 school year. Having successfully completed the evaluation readiness process with the development of goals and measurable objectives, a comprehensive evaluation is recommended.

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# **BACKGROUND**

## **Program Description and Purpose**

The Distance Learning Program in Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) provides videoconferencing and online courses for students. The program was designed to offer additional educational opportunities to students who would not normally have access to them. The program allows students, instructors, and administrators the opportunity to participate in instructional (classroom), administrative (meetings), and training (professional development) activities.

The Distance Learning Program is composed of three components. The first is daily instruction via two-way videoconferencing using the stationary Distance Learning Lab located in each middle and high school, which is referred to as Quality Connection. The second is referred to as Videoconferencing on Wheels (VOW), which utilizes several mobile videoconferencing units that can be deployed in any classroom or office in the school. The third component of the program is the Virtual Virginia Beach e-Learning or online program. This component of the program allows students to take courses online. While all of the components are an integral part of the Distance Learning Program, the differences between videoconferencing services and the online program relate to the mode of instruction, program purpose, and goals and objectives. With such variation within components of the program, this evaluation focused on the videoconferencing components which include Quality Connection and Videoconferencing on Wheels. Any references made to the Distance Learning Program from this point forward in the report will only refer to the videoconferencing component of the program.

The Distance Learning Program was initiated during the 1998-1999 school year as a pilot program at Bayside, Ocean Lakes, and Princess Anne high schools. The first course delivered through the program was Discrete Mathematics. This course was physically taught at Princess Anne High School (origination site) with Bayside and Ocean Lakes high schools as receiving sites or remote sites. The pilot program eventually expanded to include all middle and high schools within the division.

### **Quality Connection (Lab-Based Distance Learning Courses)**

The process to determine what courses would be offered through the Quality Connection component of the Distance Learning Program occurs in February of each year. Staff from the Department of Technology meet with the distance learning administrators (DLA) from each school at the middle and high school levels separately on an annual basis. In most cases, one of the assistant principals (AP) serves in the role of the DLA. Prior to this meeting, the DLAs are required to forward all course requests to the division's distance learning coordinator. During the meeting, the DLAs discuss their course requests and work to combine course requests from multiple sites into single classes. The overall goal of the meeting is to address as many course requests from schools, therefore offering opportunities to students that would not otherwise be available. Generally, most course requests are met if qualified staff are available and staff allocations do not exceed maximum allotments. At the end of the meeting, all participants are aware of what courses will be offered during the next school year, which sites will be receiving

sites and which ones will be sending sites, expected student enrollment, and staff allocations for each course.

According to Department of Technology staff, qualified teachers and teacher assistants are selected by their building principals to teach a requested course. The selection of teachers and teacher assistants is based on the same selection process used throughout the school division and includes such factors as certifications/endorsements, work experience, and recommendations. In addition, building principals are encouraged by the Department of Technology staff to hire staff who are comfortable learning and using technology to ensure effective integration of technology into classroom instruction.

According to the Department of Technology staff, all teachers and teacher assistants who are new to the Distance Learning Program are required to complete mandatory training, which focuses on an introduction to the equipment, processes, and techniques of instructional delivery. Participants also receive hands-on training in the use of the VBCPS Distance Learning Labs. There is also refresher training for experienced DL teachers that focuses on updating the skills in distance learning instruction. Participants receive training on strategies and techniques that are part of the distance learning instruction, such as ensuring classroom instruction is not limited to a lecture-style format, teacher/student interaction is maximized, and students receive instruction that consistently includes interactive features, such as group work, student leadership, and presentations. Techniques for motivating students at the remote site(s) include making students feel that they are participating in something unique and exciting, reiterating the differences and benefits of taking a course through the Distance Learning Program, encouraging students to make comments, and establishing a “we’re all in this together” ethos. Another strategy utilized to promote teacher and student interaction as well as to encourage student participation is to provide instruction from the receiving site(s), occasionally throughout the course, so students at both the receiving and sending sites have some face time with the instructor. In order for students to receive high-quality instruction as part of the Distance Learning Program, staff must be proficient in the use of technological equipment and must have a course of action in place to address technical problems skillfully with minimal disruption to instruction.

The Quality Connection component of the program allows for live interaction between the instructor and students at the remote site(s). From the sending or origination site, a primary camera is focused on the teacher who utilizes a touchscreen to manipulate the camera. The teacher can manipulate the document camera as well as cameras at the remote site(s) and select the video sources seen by students. At the receiving or remote site(s), a student with a question presses a button on a microphone, the remote site camera zooms in on the student, and the microphone allows the student’s question to be heard by the teacher and students at the other site(s). Generally, there are students located at the origination site with the teacher who transmits instruction to two or three receiving sites. The origination site is the distance learning classroom that is the controlling location in a videoconferencing session that transmits instruction. The remote site(s) receive the instruction by a videoconferencing system.

Through Quality Connection, the Distance Learning Program has been able to offer advanced courses and historically low enrollment courses such as Japanese IV, Latin, AP Art History, German III, and Chinese. During the 2009-2010 school year, the program offered over

30 courses and had 1,776 enrollments in courses at the middle and high school levels. Appendix A displays a complete listing of course offerings and enrollments for the 2009-2010 school year at the middle and high school levels.

### **Videoconferencing on Wheels (VOW)**

The second component of the Distance Learning Program is the Videoconferencing on Wheels (VOW) component. Schools can request the use of VOW by completing an online form and submitting it to the Department of Technology. Part of completing the form includes indicating the nature of the event (i.e., instructional or professional development event or an administrative meeting). Once the online form has been submitted, the Department of Technology works with the school to schedule the event on the master VOW calendar, which can be viewed on the VOW SharePoint site. Schools are required to place their request for the mobile unit at least ten days before the event to ensure the equipment is compatible with the site. Staff members from the Department of Technology deliver the mobile unit to the requested site, provide instruction on its usage, and retrieve the unit at the completion of the event or activity. The Department of Technology maintains a record of the schools that utilize the VOW unit. In addition, schools that use their own mobile units are encouraged to forward data to the Department of Technology regarding events that utilize the mobile units.

The VOW acts as a complementary option to the Quality Connection component of the program by allowing even more opportunities for students, teachers, staff, and administrators in VBCPS. The school division has 23 VOW units, which allow videoconferencing to be utilized in any office or classroom location throughout the school division. Seven school sites have their own mobile unit housed within their school building, and three schools have units that are permanent “loaners” from the district office. Most schools do not have their own mobile units and gain usage through the request process from the Department of Technology, which houses thirteen mobile units. The mobile units provide HD- or DVD-quality video and audio with a flat-screen display. The system offers a pan-tilt zoom camera for extensive room viewing, real-time presentation, and document and image interaction. According to the records maintained for the usage of all VOW units within the division during the 2009-2010 school year, the VOW units were used for nearly 150 events for such instructional purposes as virtual field trips and book clubs between schools, training events related to professional development courses, and administrative meetings with consultants and guest speakers. A complete listing of events/activities utilized by VOW during the 2009-2010 school year can be found in Appendix B.

## **Selection and Approval of Program for Evaluation**

The Distance Learning Program was selected and approved for an Evaluation Readiness Report based on criteria specified in School Board Policy 6-26, adopted by the School Board on September 5, 2007. School Board Policy 6-26 states:

Existing programs will be evaluated based on an annual Program Evaluation Schedule which will be developed by the Program Evaluation Committee and approved by the School Board annually.... On a yearly basis, the evaluation committee will present a list of programs recommended for evaluation to the Superintendent and the School Board. This listing will include the rationale for each recommendation based on an approved set of criteria. All programs will be prioritized for evaluation based on the following factors:

1. Alignment with the school division's strategic plan and School Board goals
2. Program cost
3. Program scale
4. Cross-departmental interest
5. Community/stakeholder interest in the program
6. Availability of information on the program's effectiveness
7. Date of most recent evaluation

The Program Evaluation Committee met on July 29, 2009 to review educational programs utilizing the rubric developed for rating all existing programs, which was derived from the above criteria. Groups of committee members ranked all programs using the rubric, and rankings were discussed in order to determine which programs would be recommended for evaluation. The Distance Learning Program received one of the top rankings for evaluation due to program cost, cross departmental involvement, the lack of available information about program effectiveness, and the fact that the program has never been evaluated. Following the Program Evaluation Committee's decision regarding the recommended list of programs for evaluation during 2009-2010, the Superintendent's Cabinet reviewed and discussed the recommendations on August 10, 2009. The finalized list of existing programs recommended for evaluation during 2009-2010 was then presented to the School Board on August 18, 2009 and approved by the School Board on September 1, 2009. During this process, it was also recommended and approved that the Distance Learning Program would be scheduled for an Evaluation Readiness Report rather than a Comprehensive Evaluation. This recommendation was primarily due to the need to review and revise goals and develop measurable objectives for the program.

## **OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

A review of the Distance Learning Program documentation revealed four formalized goals that included:

1. Provide equity in course offerings to middle and high school students by combining enrollments at several school sites, each of which has too few students to form a class locally.
2. Utilize instructional staff efficiently.
3. Provide an alternate venue for professional development experiences.
4. Provide access to instructional resources and educational experiences from outside the school division via videoconferencing.

The overarching goals of the Distance Learning Program outlined key aspects of operating the program. However, the goals did not include specific objectives that included the manner in which progress toward meeting the program goals would be measured.

The next section of this report describes the process for developing the revised goals and objectives for the program. In revising the goals and objectives, the focus was on including the key components mentioned in existing goals and objectives while extending the discussion to address specific outcomes that would be expected of the various activities and processes in order for the Distance Learning Program to be successful. In addition, the revised objectives included the manner in which the objectives would be measured and evaluated during the distance learning evaluation process.

## **PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING REVISED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

According to School Board Policy 6-26, for programs selected for an Evaluation Readiness Report, the Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment will “assist program staff in defining measurable goals and objectives, as well as linkages with activities and outcomes. An Evaluation Readiness Report focusing on the outcomes of this process will be presented to the Superintendent and School Board....” The process to complete an Evaluation Readiness Report began in February 2010 with a review of the existing Distance Learning Program documentation by a Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment program evaluator. The program’s history, course offerings, purpose, and goals of the program were reviewed.

A committee was formed to review and revise goals and develop measurable objectives for the Distance Learning Program, as well as linkages with activities and outcomes as stated in School Board Policy 6-26. The committee included representatives from the departments of Technology; School Administration; and Research, Evaluation, and Assessment. Committee members met on April 27, 2010 to discuss the overall evaluation of the Distance Learning Program and to refine and enhance the goals and objectives of the program. Notes taken by the evaluator during this meeting were organized by comments concerning expectations and areas applicable to the following categories: equity in course offerings, offering of otherwise unavailable educational opportunities, usage of staff efficiently, staff training and support, student learning outcomes, and administrative and training opportunities.

A second meeting was held on June 10, 2010 to review program goals and measurable objectives. At this meeting, the evaluator met to further refine the draft list of goals and to discuss specific concepts that should be represented in the more specific measurable objectives

that would be used to evaluate progress toward meeting each goal. Numerous guided questions were used to develop measurable objectives for each goal. A third meeting was held on August 16, 2010 to discuss any additional feedback from the committee members regarding the goals and objectives. The program goals and measurable objectives were finalized in mid-August 2010.

## **REVISED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

As a result of the evaluation readiness process, the following goals and measurable objectives were established for the Distance Learning Program:

**Goal 1:** Ensure equity in course offerings for VBCPS students.

*Objective 1:* Students are provided equal access to course offerings regardless of school enrollment site based on course requests and course offerings.

**Goal 2:** Serve as a viable medium to offer otherwise unavailable educational opportunities to VBCPS students.

*Objective 1:* Schools utilize the Distance Learning Program to provide otherwise unavailable educational opportunities to VBCPS students and staff based on an analysis of educational opportunities offered by the Distance Learning Program.

*Objective 2:* The Distance Learning Program provides otherwise unavailable educational opportunities to middle school students taking a distance learning course as assessed by the number and percentage of middle school students enrolled in a course for Carnegie credit.

*Objective 3:* Key program components of the Distance Learning Program are rated as positive by stakeholders based on student, teacher, administrator, and parent survey responses. (Key program components: technical and connectivity issues and support/resources for stakeholders)

**Goal 3:** Support the school division's efforts to utilize instructional staff efficiently.

*Objective 1:* Combining students from multiple sites into single classes supports the school division's efforts to utilize instructional staff efficiently as evidenced by an analysis of teacher allocations and status (full versus part-time positions).

**Goal 4:** Provide Distance Learning Program staff with effective training and support in order to offer quality instruction to VBCPS students.

*Objective 1:* Training for distance learning staff on strategies and techniques relevant to teaching distance learning courses is provided as evidenced by a review of the staff development schedule for target participants, learning plans, and staff survey responses.

*Objective 2:* Distance learning staff provide classroom instruction based on training that incorporates distance learning strategies and techniques as evidenced by classroom observation rubric/checklist, and student, teacher, and administrator survey responses.

*Objective 3:* Distance learning teachers, staff, and administrators receive effective support from the Department of Technology when needed as measured by teacher, staff, and administrator survey responses.

*Objective 4:* The educational opportunities provided by the Distance Learning Program in order to enrich instruction through integrated technologies as evidenced by student, teacher, and administrator survey responses.

**Goal 5:** Ensure that students gain the same or similar learning outcomes in distance learning courses as compared to students receiving instruction in a traditional setting.

*Objective 1:* Distance learning students will have the same or similar performance in courses when compared to students receiving instruction in a traditional setting as evidenced by student course grades.

*Objective 2:* Distance learning students will be engaged in the learning process as evidenced by student, teacher, parent, and administrator survey responses.

**Goal 6:** Act as a viable alternate delivery option for administrative and training opportunities for VBCPS staff.

*Objective 1:* The Distance Learning Program is a viable alternate delivery option for administrative and training opportunities based on teacher and administrator survey responses and an assessment of administrative and training opportunities.

## **EVALUATION PLAN AND RECOMMENDATION**

According to School Board Policy 6-26, an Evaluation Readiness Report will focus on the outcomes of the evaluation readiness process and “will be presented to the Superintendent and School Board with a recommendation regarding future evaluation plans for the program. If appropriate based on the evaluation readiness process, the program will be scheduled for a Comprehensive Evaluation.” In accordance with this policy, a proposed plan of action for the Distance Learning Program is described in the section below.

### **Scope and Rationale of Proposed Evaluation**

The Distance Learning Program was approved for an Evaluation Readiness Report during the 2009-2010 school year. As part of the evaluation readiness process, the purpose of the program as well as goals and objectives were reviewed. Subsequent meetings with staff from the departments of Technology; School Administration; and Research, Evaluation, and Assessment involved revisions of program goals and the development of measurable objectives for the Distance Learning Program. The feedback from the meetings by directors, coordinators, and

specialists was critical to the overall evaluation readiness process, as staff from each department served as an ad hoc committee member throughout the process. In order to accomplish the purpose of the Distance Learning Program evaluation, it is recommended that a comprehensive evaluation be completed for the Distance Learning Program during the 2010-2011 school year, which will include implementation and outcome information related to the program. The comprehensive evaluation reviews the process in place for program implementation and determines if the program is meeting its goals and objectives.

### **Proposed Evaluation Method**

The proposed evaluation method during 2010-2011 is to focus on program goals such as course offerings, other educational opportunities for training and administrative needs, staff development, technical support and resources, student learning outcomes related to academic performance, student engagement, and the opportunities to enrich instruction through integrated supportive technologies. In addition, the research design will employ the use of comparison groups in order to analyze the academic performance of students taking a distance learning course as compared to students receiving instruction in a traditional setting. The extent to which comparison groups will be utilized for the evaluation of outcomes will be determined during the 2010-2011 evaluation period. The planned implementation- and outcome-related evaluation questions that will be addressed in the 2010-2011 Distance Learning Comprehensive Evaluation include the following:

1. What were the operational components of program implementation?
  - a. What is the process for requesting and offering courses through the Distance Learning Program?
  - b. What is the school-based process for determining what courses to request?
  - c. What training opportunities are available for distance learning staff who provide instruction for distance learning courses?
  - d. What technological and resource supports are available to distance learning staff?
  - e. What strategies and techniques are expected as a part of distance learning classroom instruction?
  - f. What was the teacher-selection process for the program?
2. What were the characteristics of the students who participated in the Distance Learning Program?
3. What progress was made toward meeting the goals and objectives for the Distance Learning Program?
4. What were stakeholders' perceptions of the programs (e.g., assistant principals, distance learning staff, students, and parents)?
5. What was the cost of the program to the school division?

Table 1 provides an outline for the process of collecting data and evaluating the outcomes for the Distance Learning Program referenced on pages 6-7. These data will be included in the program evaluation report that will be submitted to the School Board in fall 2011.

**Table 1**  
**Baseline Data Collection Process for Program Objectives**

<b>Program Objective</b>	<b>Data Used to Evaluate Progress Toward Meeting Objectives</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
<b>Goal 1,</b> Objective 1	Course requests and course offerings.	Percent of course requests resulting in course offerings.	Schools/DOT/VBCPS Data Warehouse
<b>Goal 2,</b> Objective 1	Schools using DL to provide educational opportunities.	Qualitative analysis of educational opportunities offered.	DOT listing of courses and activities
<b>Goal 2,</b> Objective 2	DL middle school student enrollment in courses for Carnegie credit.	Percent of middle school students enrolled in DL courses for Carnegie credit.	VBCPS Data Warehouse
<b>Goal 2,</b> Objective 3	Survey data demonstrating that stakeholders, including VOW, rate key program components positively.	Percent of survey respondents responding positively.	Surveys
<b>Goal 3,</b> Objective 1	Staff allocations for DL staff.	Percent of full- and part-time allocations for DL staff.	Budget, HR
<b>Goal 4,</b> Objective 1	Compilation of training opportunities, learning plans, and survey data demonstrating that stakeholders agree the DL training is effective.	Review of training schedule and opportunities, learning plans, and percent of survey respondents responding positively.	PDP catalog, learning plans, surveys
<b>Goal 4,</b> Objective 2	Observations that support the use of DL strategies and techniques used in the classroom; survey data demonstrating that classroom instruction includes DL strategies and techniques.	Percent of classes displaying DL strategies/techniques based on classroom checklist/rubric and learning plans; percent of survey respondents responding positively that DL strategies/techniques were used.	Learning plans, classroom observation checklist/rubric, surveys
<b>Goal 4,</b> Objective 3	Survey data demonstrating that stakeholders receive effective support from DOT.	Percent of survey respondents responding positively.	Surveys
<b>Goal 4,</b> Objective 4	Survey data demonstrating that DL enriches instruction through integrated technologies.	Percent of survey respondents responding positively.	Surveys
<b>Goal 5,</b> Objective 1	Course grades demonstrating that DL students experience the same or similar learning outcomes.	Percent of DL students with a passing grade to non-DL students in same class.	VBCPS Data Warehouse
<b>Goal 5,</b> Objective 2	Survey data demonstrating that students are engaged in the learning process.	Percent of survey respondents responding positively.	Surveys
<b>Goal 6,</b> Objective 1	Survey data demonstrating that stakeholders agree the DL program is a viable alternative for administrative and training opportunities.	Percent of survey respondents responding positively.	Surveys

Note: Refer to pages 6-7 of this report for the program objectives.

## **RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION READINESS PROCESS**

In collaboration with representatives from the departments of Technology; School Administration; and Research, Evaluation, and Assessment, the evaluation readiness process resulted in a review of the existing goals of the Distance Learning Program. Using the existing goals as a foundation, goals for the program were revised, and specific measurable objectives were developed. The program evaluator also planned the components of the comprehensive evaluation including the evaluation questions and the data collection process for evaluating the program objectives. A summary of the results of the evaluation readiness process is provided below.

- A committee of representatives from departments involved in overseeing the Distance Learning Program and program evaluation staff met to develop goals and measurable objectives and discussed the Comprehensive Evaluation Plan for 2010-2011.
- The first goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Ensure equity in course offerings for VBCPS students.” One measurable objective was defined based on this goal and focused on distance learning course requests and enrollments.
- The second goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Serve as a viable medium to offer otherwise unavailable educational opportunities to VBCPS students.” Multiple measurable objectives were derived based on this goal and focused on educational opportunities provided to students at each level (elementary, middle, and high) and student, teacher, administrator, and parent perceptions of program quality.
- The third goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Support the school division’s efforts to utilize instructional staff efficiently.” One measurable objective was based on this goal and focused on staffing allocations and the impact on teachers’ employment status (full- and part-time employment).
- The fourth goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Provide Distance Learning Program staff with effective training and support in order to offer quality instruction to VBCPS students.” Multiple measurable objectives were derived based on this goal and focused on the quality of training received.
- The fifth goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Ensure that students gain the same or similar learning outcomes in distance learning courses as compared to students receiving instruction in a traditional setting.” Multiple measurable objectives were derived based on this goal and focused on the student learning outcomes based on grades and student, teacher, administrator, and parent perceptions of program quality.
- The sixth goal developed for the Distance Learning Program was to “Act as a viable alternate delivery option for administrative and training opportunities for VBCPS staff.” One measurable objective was defined based on this goal and focused on teacher and administrator perceptions of program quality.

- A proposed evaluation plan for the Distance Learning Program was developed. This plan included the evaluation questions that would be the focus of the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for 2010-2011 and the planned data collection process for evaluating the program goals and objectives.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The information garnered from the Distance Learning Program evaluation readiness process led to the formulation of the following recommendation. A rationale is also presented for the recommendation.

*Recommendation 1:* Conduct a comprehensive evaluation during the 2010-2011 school year, focused on program implementation, student academic outcomes, and stakeholders' perceptions of program quality. (Department of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment)

*Rationale:* It is proposed that a comprehensive evaluation of the Distance Learning Program be conducted during the 2010-2011 school year, which focuses on evaluating implementation-related issues, student outcomes, and stakeholders' perceptions. A comprehensive evaluation has not been conducted for the Distance Learning Program since its inception during the 1998-1999 school year. Having successfully completed the evaluation readiness process with the development of goals and measurable objectives, a comprehensive evaluation is recommended.

## APPENDIX A

### Overall Course, Section, and Student Count for Quality Connection During the 2009-2010 School Year

	Course Count	Section Count	Student Count
Regularly Scheduled Middle School Instruction via Quality Connection	12	66	1,242
Regularly Scheduled High School Instruction via Quality Connection	20	28	534

### Course Offerings and Enrollment for Quality Connection During the 2009-2010 School Year

High School DL Course Offerings and Enrollments		Middle School DL Course Offerings and Enrollments	
Course Offerings	Course Enrollments	Course Offerings	Course Enrollments
Accounting	26	Chinese I	12
Advanced Accounting	17	French XP	56
AP Art History	27	French I	32
AP French	27	French II	40
AP Government Comparative	18	German XP	287
AP Japanese	5	German I	45
French IV	18	Japanese I	287
French V	11	Japanese II	80
German III	30	Japanese XP	61
German IV	21	Latin I	278
Latin II	20	Latin XP	57
Latin IV	23	Spanish II	7
Music Theory I	37	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>1,242</b>
Music Theory II	37		
Japanese III	29		
Japanese IV*	42		
Russian I*	60		
Russian II*	48		
Russian III*	21		
Russian V	17		
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>534</b>		

\*Denotes more than one course section.

## APPENDIX B

### Events and Activities Offered Through Videoconferencing During 2009-2010

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Subtotal
Instructional events via Videoconferencing on Wheels (e.g., student book clubs between schools, virtual field trips)		10	7	8	10	18	18	13	7	8	99
Administrative/Meetings events via Videoconferencing on Wheels (e.g., graduate classes, visiting speaker, follow-up meetings, consultant demonstrations)			5		4	4	9	4	8	3	37
Training events via Videoconferencing on Wheels (e.g., PDP sessions)		4		1	5						10
	<b>Total</b>										<b>146</b>