DRAFT WORKPLAN
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

November 14: COMMITTEE MEETING (12:30pm, SCHEV Offices)
• Review charge and background materials
• Discuss with experts
• Provide preliminary feedback and guidance to staff

{November 15 – December 9
Staff translates feedback from members and experts into preliminary foci and proposals
}

December 10: COMMITTEE MEETING (9:30am, Location TBD)
• Review preliminary foci and proposals
• Discuss with experts
• Provide feedback and guidance to staff

{December 11 – January 6
Staff develops and sharpens foci and proposals
}

January 7: COMMITTEE MEETING (Time & location TBD)
• Review foci and proposals with experts
• Provide final feedback and guidance to staff

{January 8 – 13
Staff translates feedback into document for Council
}

JANUARY 14: COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL
SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW
Staff Analysis for the
Ad Hoc Committee on Educational Attainment

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia created an ad hoc committee on educational attainment following receipt of three related but distinct sets of information:

(i) remarks from former governor Gerald Baliles regarding the “Rural Horseshoe”; 
(ii) a report by the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University on “moving rural Virginia forward”; and 
(iii) remarks from House Speaker Kirk Cox regarding the “talent pipeline”.

These resources center on aspects of the current and future well-being of the Commonwealth and its citizens. Each connects a broad definition of well-being to a narrower one involving economic prosperity and higher education. While all describe an inexplicable link between Virginia’s future economic viability and postsecondary education opportunities (and results), the description of the role that higher education can and/or should play varies.

Each resource also contains a statewide call to action, with Baliles and Cox outlining specific roles for SCHEV; the universities’ report offers ideas that could involve SCHEV but does not mention Council or the agency by name. These proposals and recommendations are bold and large-scale – especially from Baliles and Cox – requiring major changes in thinking, in policy and in action. All identify needs for more, or at least different, investments in higher education, but with very different strategies for doing so.

Gov. Baliles seeks to reduce or eliminate the gaps in economic prosperity between Virginia’s rural and non-rural areas through education. He calls for a “Marshall Plan” to bring more and better postsecondary opportunities to rural citizens and to bring rural citizens to postsecondary opportunities. To support this plan, he recommends a trust fund or some other dedicated-funding mechanism, which could include re-appropriating the Tobacco Commission’s remaining corpus. His proposal posits (higher) education as the answer to a worsening problem and seeks new efforts from colleges, universities and SCHEV without expecting these entities to change much themselves.

Del. Cox seeks much change from higher education as a precursor to the new partnerships he sees as necessary between business, government and education to meet the Commonwealth’s growing and evolving need for human talent. He seeks to change “business as usual” in Virginia higher education via new institutional performance agreements – with SCHEV playing roles via its oversight of the six-year-planning process and the performance-review process. He calls for more transparency in, accountability of and performance-based funding to public higher education to drive talent development through affordable access, internships, work-study and industry-informed curricular planning.

The universities’ report also presents an investment plan, but one focused like Baliles on rural Virginia. Here the recommendations and strategies include, but go far beyond, higher education, involving economic development, civic/public management, healthcare and preK-12 education. It calls for a data-informed Rural Prosperity Dashboard (or Index) and the convening of a working group of partners from the public, private and non-profit sectors.

In addition to each resource’s connection of economic prosperity with higher education, a common theme is a need for advocating, promoting and marketing the value and benefits of higher education to Virginians, with SCHEV posited as a – or the – leader in this endeavor.
The Well-Being of the Commonwealth and the Well-Being of Higher Education in the Commonwealth are Inexplicably Linked

“Moving Rural Virginia Forward: Ideas for Action & Investment” (UVa, VT & VSU)

The gap between the “socioeconomic fortunes” of urban & rural Virginia is quantifiable and growing, and the economic outcomes are diverging.

Rural localities trail on key measures of community well-being, incl population growth, employment growth, wage growth, new business formation, educational attainment & access to health care & other services.

Create a Rural Prosperity Dashboard/Index

1. Invest in civic innovation & public mgmt
2. Invest in entrepreneurship & innovation-led economic development
3. Invest in healthcare & telemedicine
4. Invest in early childhood & K-12 ed
5. Invest in higher ed & workforce dev
   a. Convene a Shared Prosperity Working Group to develop new rural strategies
   b. Expand collaborations between university researchers & rural entrepreneurs
   c. Increase community college & university engagement in rural health initiatives
   d. Align higher ed institution facilities & program planning with rural economic & workforce dev needs

Gov. Baliles’ Remarks to Joint Meeting of SCHEV Council & Council of Presidents

The Commonwealth is “Two Virginias” -- the “Rural Horseshoe” and the “Golden Crescent”.

How can Virginia become the best-educated state when educational attainment in its rural areas is as low as that in the lowest-performing states?

Create a “Marshall Plan for Rural Va”

• Make a bold educational effort in rural areas to actively recruit students & adults to classrooms & workshops.
• Assign shared responsibility for public colleges & universities to provide lifelong learning, online instruction & financial incentives for entering & completing ed programs in rural areas.
• Promote/market the role and value of higher education
• Convene, via SCHEV, the higher-ed community, business leaders & civic leaders to develop & advocate for such a plan.

Create a “dedicated source of funding” and/or a “trust fund” for higher ed, or all education.

• Expand funding of community-college education for rural citizens.

“A New Partnership for Talent, Affordability & Performance-based Accountability” (Del. Cox’s remarks to SCHEV Council)

A partnership: (a) with business, education & government collaborating on the major economic priorities, esp. the talent pipeline; (b) to ensure all Virginians’ access to a great, affordable education, a work-study experience & a job; and (c) based on performance, with public funding tied to measurable outcomes, with transparency & accountability, & with a business standard of performance.

The “bond of trust” between the public and higher ed, and between higher ed and elected officials, is shaky & at risk.

Virginia needs to become the “Top State for Talent”. Four pathways include:
1. Market higher ed to talented learners, instate & out. Retain them via work-study/internships that lead to jobs.
2. Align our talent development with current & future job opportunities.
3. Create partnerships for talent development in high-demand sectors.
4. Capitalize on existing &/or potential talent (veterans, adults, CTE).

The key will be crafting new higher-ed institutional partnership agreements on talent, the economy & student outcomes.