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1 **HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 40**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 14, 2026

4 *Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the accuracy of Standards of Quality*  
5 *compliance reports from local school divisions across the Commonwealth. Report.*

6 Patron—Webert

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 WHEREAS, Article VIII, Section II of the Constitution and Chapter 13.2 of Title 22.1 of the Code of  
9 Virginia provide for Standards of Quality in elementary and secondary education for all local public school  
10 divisions; such Standards of Quality encompass the learning and administrative requirements of the  
11 Commonwealth, including for instructional programs, staffing ratios, accreditation and other standards and  
12 assessments, student achievement and graduation, quality of classroom instruction and educational  
13 leadership, school board policies, and compliance reporting; and14 WHEREAS, since 2005, each local school board in the Commonwealth is required to annually self-report  
15 its compliance with the Standards of Quality to the Board of Education and self-certify such responses, with  
16 each standard requiring complete compliance in order for a school board to respond affirmatively to  
17 compliance, and where no partial compliance response option is available; such report is submitted to the  
18 Board of Education by the chair of the local school board and the division superintendent; and19 WHEREAS, in an October 2020 report on the Department of Education (the Department), the Joint  
20 Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) reviewed the process by which the Department assesses  
21 and certifies local school board compliance with the Standards of Quality and recommended several  
22 improvements to the Department's processes, including more detailed reporting and independent verification  
23 of self-reported data, additional monitoring of compliance for school divisions that are implementing  
24 corrective action plans, and additional analysis of compliance data; and25 WHEREAS, as of the 2020 report by JLARC, the Department's Office of Policy had one employee to  
26 oversee data compliance collection for the entire Commonwealth, and the Department lacks additional staff  
27 to implement independent verification of data, additional monitoring of schools, or oversight in regard to  
28 reporting or compliance with corrective action plans for divisions that report noncompliance with certain  
29 standards; and30 WHEREAS, JLARC's recommendations led to the Standards of Quality Compliance Pilot Program, an  
31 initiative of the Department that was implemented during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, and the  
32 resulting 2023 report by the Department on the Standards of Quality Compliance Pilot Program affirmed the  
33 findings and recommendations that JLARC previously stated in the 2020 report; and34 WHEREAS, the implementation of changes in instructional methods to provide for online learning or a  
35 combination of in-person instruction and online instruction to students due to the COVID-19 pandemic,  
36 resulting in increased burdens on teachers and administrators, and subsequent complications in recent years  
37 such as higher rates of teacher shortages, may have resulted in inaccuracies in reported data regarding the  
38 provision of required instructional time, the quality of classroom instruction, or other standards of quality;  
39 any such inaccuracies reported by local school boards, whether intended or unintended, could lead to negative  
40 impacts on the quality of education that students receive; and41 WHEREAS, it would be prudent for JLARC to thoroughly study and update their 2020 report on  
42 Standards of Quality compliance, with a specific focus on reporting accuracy following the 2023 Pilot  
43 Program Report from the Department and recent additional investments the Commonwealth has made in  
44 public elementary and secondary school education to ensure children are receiving the highest quality  
45 education; now, therefore, be it46 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and  
47 Review Commission be directed to study the accuracy of Standards of Quality compliance reports from local  
48 school divisions across the Commonwealth.49 In conducting its study, JLARC shall (i) review recommendations and observations provided in the 2023  
50 report from the Department on the Standards of Quality Compliance Pilot Program and evaluate any changes  
51 that the Department has made following the Pilot Program to further improve the accuracy of self-reported  
52 data and ensure compliance; (ii) evaluate the current data collection method for self-reported compliance data  
53 and suggest potential improvements, including streamlining questions for clarity and to eliminate any  
54 redundancies and providing nuanced compliance response options with open-ended feedback fields to allow  
55 for contextual explanations regarding such responses apart from corrective action plans; (iii) determine and  
56 update recommendations on any additional number of part-time or full-time employees needed to assure  
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59 accuracy in self-reported compliance data and estimate the funds necessary and the sources of funding for  
60 such recommendations; and (iv) provide any other recommendations or suggested methodologies to improve  
61 and ensure the greatest possible accuracy for Standards of Quality compliance data.

62 Technical assistance shall be provided to JLARC by the Department, the Board of Education, and all local  
63 school boards. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to JLARC for this study, upon  
64 request.

65 The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2026,  
66 and the chair shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its  
67 findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2027 Regular Session of the General  
68 Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether JLARC intends to submit to the General Assembly  
69 and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate  
70 document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the  
71 Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall  
72 be posted on the General Assembly's website.