



Virginia Boys and Men Advisory Commission

July 20, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.

General Assembly Building, House Room B-205

<https://studies.viriniageneralassembly.gov/studies/794>

The Virginia Boys and Men Advisory Commission (the Commission) met on July 20, 2026. Delegate Joshua E. Thomas was elected as chair, and Senator Lamont Bagby was elected as vice-chair.¹ The meeting began with introductions and opening remarks followed by presentations and discussion. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [*Commission's meetings webpage*](#).

Virtual Meeting Policy and Review of Enabling Legislation

Troy Hatcher, Legislative Counsel, Division of Legislative Services

Mr. Hatcher provided an overview of the proposed virtual meeting policy for consideration by the Commission. He explained the options available to the Commission and noted that the policy encompasses all of the allowable provisions under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as well as House and Senate rules for virtual voting. The Commission unanimously voted to adopt the policy.

Mr. Hatcher also provide an overview of HB 1188 (Thomas, 2026 Regular Session) and SB 447 (Bagby, 2026 Regular Session), which is the enabling legislation that created the Commission. Mr. Hatcher highlighted the four powers and duties of the Commission, including the annual reporting requirements, as well as the Commission's expiration date of July 1, 2029.

Presentation: Setting the Stage: An Overview of Educational Challenges and Opportunities Facing Boys in Virginia

Richard V. Reeves, President, American Institute for Boys and Men

Alanna Williams, Vice President, American Institute for Boys and Men

Mr. Reeves and Ms. Williams provided an overview of challenges and opportunities facing boys and men in Virginia, with a focus on education. They explained Virginia data showing that (i) under half of boys arrive at kindergarten ready; (ii) there is a reading gap for fourth-grade boys versus girls with no recovery for the boys; (iii) the gap compounds with race; (iv) girls out-graduate boys and boys drop out at 1.5 times the rate of girls; (v) men's enrollment in college is drifting down; and (vi) there is a 10-point gap among young Virginia adults who earn college degrees. They also discussed male brain development, highlighting that skills like self-regulation develop later in boys, whereas the female brain matures earlier where school rewards it most. Additionally, they provided data on how schools do not engage boys and how boys are more impacted by environment and disadvantages. They ended the presentation by providing the

¹ **Members Present:** Delegate Joshua E. Thomas (chair), Senator Lamont Bagby (vice-chair), Senator Lashrecse D. Aird, Senator Luther Cifers, III, Senator Mamie E. Locke, Delegate Michael B. Feggans, Delegate Garrett McGuire, Delegate Atoosa R. Reaser, Delegate Andrew Rice, Delegate Michael J. Webert, Eldon Burton, Secretary Marvin B. Figueroa

Members Absent: Secretary Carrie H. Chenery, Secretary Stanley M. Meador, Secretary Jeffery O. Smith

following potential areas of focus for Virginia: (a) bringing men back to the classroom as teachers, (b) rebuilding boys' reading skills and fostering enjoyment in school, and (c) building pathways in career and technical education (CTE) and higher education.

Presentation: Virginia is for Teachers: A National Model for Male Educator Recruitment

Curtis Valentine, President, The Male Educator Network and Policy Institute (MEN)

Mr. Valentine discussed the importance of encouraging men to become teachers. He noted that fewer men are in the classroom—nationally only 23 percent of teachers are men as compared to 33 percent in the 1980s, and only 18 percent of teachers in Virginia are men. Additionally, he reported that fewer than three percent of early childhood educators are men compared to 20 percent of elementary and middle school teachers and 43 percent of high school teachers. Nationally, only one in four undergraduate education degrees are awarded to men, whereas in Virginia it is only 17 percent. He highlighted different ways male teachers benefit male students, such as mentoring, setting expectations, filling gaps in teaching, and providing diversity. He also provided information on a study on male educator motivations, different pathways in teaching, and models for success in Virginia. Lastly, he asked the Commission to be data-based, with specific information requests to the Governor of Virginia, and to invest in proven solutions, such as establishing grant programs and building community networks.

Public Comment

Members of the public were given a chance to speak regarding the information presented at the meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for August 25, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the General Assembly Building, House Room B-205.

For more information, see the [Commission's website](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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