



# VSBA

**Virginia School Boards Association**

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

## **VSBA Equity in Education Month**

March 2022

Sponsored by



# March 2022–VSBA EQUITY IN EDUCATION MONTH

Dear School Board Member/Superintendent:

In an effort to encourage equity in education, the VSBA Board of Directors has designated the month of March as VSBA Equity in Education Month. The 2022 VSBA Equity in Education Month is proudly sponsored by Sodexo.

Equity in education is a significant challenge nationwide. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, most public-school students were students of color, and more than half of public-school students qualify for subsidized meals due to low family income.

In Virginia, 40% of our students are considered economically disadvantaged with approximately 1/3 white (not Hispanic), 1/3 Black, and 1/3 Hispanic. We believe Virginia should lead the country in serving ALL our students with excellence.

With the added inequities that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, and the challenges that we are faced with economically, it is more important now than ever before that we as advocates and servants of public education are addressing these inequities head on. We must ensure that all students no matter their zip code, area of the state they reside, or size of their school division receive the supports necessary to achieve positive academic outcomes. When inequity in education persists, there is a cost to all involved including missed opportunities for economic development, greater dependence on government supports, and fewer Virginians ready to serve and lead.

School board members, superintendents, teachers, and families play a critical role in creating a climate and curriculum where all students receive the resources they need, so they graduate prepared for success after high school.

VSBA will publicize Equity in Education Month in our newsletter, on the VSBA website, through social media and will send out a statewide news release urging news organizations to provide coverage of local activities. School divisions are encouraged to issue their own news releases, and it would be helpful if divisions would apprise the VSBA of any related activities taking place in their division. Potential activities could include:

- Adopt a proclamation similar to the one adopted by the VSBA Board of Directors (see enclosed).
- Write a letter to the editor or contact a local reporter to see if they will do a story about educational equity initiatives taking place in the division.
- Hold school or division student contests (poster, video, writing, etc.) around the theme of “Equity in Education.”
- Conduct community workshops on equity, which could include the opportunity for community members to share information on their ethnicity and background, highlighting the similarity and diversity among members of the group.

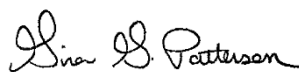
This guide includes several resources to assist you in these efforts, including references to policies on equity adopted by boards in Virginia, a sample news release, and a proclamation adopted by the VSBA Board of Directors.

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to spread awareness, examine and discuss strategies, and review current trends and best practices that will positively impact the educational outcomes for all students.

Sincerely,



Teddy D. Martin, II  
VSBA President



Gina G. Patterson  
Executive Director

# SAMPLE EQUITY POLICIES

The divisions below have adopted a policy that addresses educational equity. Please review the policies below, and follow the link to view the policy in its entirety.

## **Mathews County Public Schools**

File: DAB

EQUITY POLICY

### A. Purpose

The Mathews County School Board has adopted this policy to ensure equitable and fair educational opportunities for all students by allocating resources fairly and equitably, providing diverse learning opportunities, and demonstrating the commitment of equity and fairness across the school division...

Full policy available [here](#).

## **Winchester City Public Schools**

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EQUITY

### I. PURPOSE

The Winchester Public School Board is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools. The Board recognizes that the outcomes of the Winchester Public Schools may not always align with the vision of the Board's strategic plan, beliefs and mission across...

Full policy available [here](#).

## **Roanoke City Public Schools**

Code: DAB

EQUITY POLICY

### I. Purpose

The School Board has adopted this policy to ensure equitable and fair educational opportunities for all students by allocating resources fairly and equitably, providing diverse learning opportunities, and demonstrating the commitment of equity and fairness across the...

Full policy available [here](#).

**Additional information from the United States Department of Education and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is available by visiting:**

<https://www.ed.gov/equity>.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>,

<https://www.k12dive.com/news/comprehensive-ed-dept-survey-finds-persistent-civil-rights-disparities/420470/>

## VSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, inequities in schools have become an increasingly significant challenge in the United States and Virginia; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of school-aged kids are children of color and over fifty percent of public-school students qualify for subsidized meals; and

**WHEREAS**, we recognize that factors including, but not limited to, disability, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status have a demonstrated history of impacting the educational opportunities provided to a student; and

**WHEREAS**, the promise of public education is for every child to be successful in school and life; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important for Virginia families, students, teachers, and school administrators to be aware of the diverse needs of learners, and to encourage discussion of the challenges as a school community; and

**WHEREAS**, the VSBA has established a Task Force on Students and Schools in Challenging Environments to make recommendations and to stay at the forefront of discussions on equity in Virginia schools;

**WHEREAS**, we recognize that inequities in resources, including educational settings, supplies, technology, and building, impedes student learning;

Now, **THEREFORE**, Be it Resolved, the Virginia School Boards Association recognizes the month of March 2022 as VSBA Equity in Education Month, with the intention that educational equity, best practices, and programming be discussed in Virginia's schools, communities and classrooms during that time.

# **SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

[DATE]

**Contact**

[NAME]

[PHONE]

## **March Is VSBA Equity in Education Month**

[CITY/COUNTY], VA -- School board members, superintendents, teachers, and families can play a critical role in creating a climate and curriculum where all students receive the resources they need so they graduate prepared for success after high school. This is why the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) has declared March to be VSBA Equity in Education Month. The 2022 VSBA Equity in Education Month is proudly sponsored by Sedexo.

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[INSERT QUOTE FROM BOARD MEMBER AND/OR SUPERINTENDENT]

Local activities include [INSERT LIST OF ACTIVITIES]

The Virginia School Boards Association, a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through advocacy, training, and services.