



VSBA President
Robert L. Hundley, Jr.
Hanover County School Board

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DATES TO REMEMBER

April 20, 2017
Hot Topic Conference
Charlottesville

May 3, 2017 **New Date******
Hot Topic Conference
Wytheville

May 18, 2017
Superintendent Evaluation
Workshop

June 2, 2017
School Law Conference

July 17, 2017
VSBA Orientations

July 18, 2017
VSBA Conference on
Education

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope this message finds each of you well, if not wondering when your winter may end. Your advocacy efforts have once again paid off! Earlier in March we learned that the governor vetoed each of the troublesome bills we have lobbied our legislators against. While many of these bills may start out with good intentions, the details of most create either unconstitutional situations or are not financially viable. I have encouraged our regional chairs to take advantage of the regional meetings we host at the summer Conference on Education each July to try and discuss those issues from some of these bills that you may believe are good ideas that we will likely continue to see from the legislature. If there are portions of the bills that are helpful, VSBA is willing to take a leadership role once our Delegate Assembly provides guidance. As you may know, our Delegate Assembly legislative process begins with member boards providing position statements for VSBA to consider. Positions are discussed each summer by our Legislative Positions Committee consisting of school board member representatives from around the Commonwealth. Once the committee has accepted the position, it goes before our Board of Directors and then the Delegate Assembly at the Annual Convention in November.

The VSBA Staff and leadership team have recently returned from our trip west to the NSBA Annual Conference in Denver, CO. As always, the NSBA Annual Conference provided significant opportunities for us to learn about best practices that are ongoing across the country. As is the case each year, Saturday morning started with the VSBA breakfast which provided all VSBA attendees an opportunity to see each other at least once during the conference. The breakfast also provided us a chance to publicly recognize those outstanding divisions that were to be recognized nationally for their great work here in Virginia. Presentations were given by board members, superintendents and/or staff from Albemarle County, Chesterfield County, Fairfax County, Prince William County and Virginia Beach City.

Five school divisions were recognized by the Center for Digital Education on the Digital District Survey. Roanoke County received 3rd place and Virginia

Beach City received 10th place in the large school division category. In the mid division category, Charlottesville City received 5th place, Williamsburg - James City County received 6th place, and Henry County received 8th place.

Virginia also had a school division recognized for receiving a Magna Award. Henrico County Public Schools was a winner in the over 20,000 enrollment category. Congratulations to all of our NSBA presenters and award winning divisions.

Our Regional Spring forums are in full swing and at almost all of them we have heard an outstanding message from our State Superintendent, Dr. Steve Staples. He has shared with school board members the work currently underway by the State Board of Education with respect to the reform of our current school accreditation process and how important our input is to the remaining work. The state Board is creating an outside the box accreditation framework that sounds exciting and will go a long way toward showcasing the great achievements of our schools while pointing out best practices that will help all schools along a path of continuous improvement.

I look forward to the forums that have not yet been held and encourage you to attend and find ways of sharing your best practices with others across our organization. Thanks again for all you do for the students of our Commonwealth.



(L to R) Past President Bill Kidd, President-Elect Scott Albrecht, President Bob Hundley, At-Large member Camilla Washington



Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

VSBA Regional Spring Network Forums

The VSBA Spring Regional meetings kicked off on March 1st with the Eastern Region. Lancaster County was the host division and the Forum was held at the breath-taking Tides Inn. School board members and superintendents from around the Eastern Region were entertained by the Lancaster Middle School chorus, under the direction of Emily Mahoney. By the way, Ms. Mahoney volunteers her time to direct the middle school choir. The guest speaker for the evening was President Paul Tribble from Christopher Newport University. Tribble encouraged board members to lead with courage and creativity, and to not to fear, but embrace change. Thank you to Regional Chairman Iris Lane, Westmoreland County and Regional Vice-Chairman Steven Tupponce, King William County for their hard work. The following were named as regional nominating committee members: Howard Hill from King & Queen County, Virginia Richards from Mathews County, and Audrey Thompson from Lancaster County.



The next meeting was the Blue Ridge Regional Forum, that took place on March 6th in Rocky Mount at the Gereau Center in Franklin County. The members of the Blue Ridge region were treated to a play by the Franklin County High School drama club, who performed a one act play called “the struggle”, which dealt with the struggles that students with ADD/dyslexia deal with daily. The guest speaker was Dr. Steve Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction, VDOE. Dr. Staples spoke on the accountability reforms and profile of graduate that the state board is working on currently. He let the members know of the five town hall meetings that will take place in June and July around the state to hear thoughts on the proposed matrix.

The town hall meetings will be held in Fairfax, Virginia Beach, South Hill, Harrisonburg, and Virginia Beach. Dates for the town halls have yet to be established. Radford City has agreed to host the 2018 Spring Network Forum. Thank you to Blue Ridge Regional Chairman Beckie Cox, Pulaski County, and Regional Vice-Chairman Connie Froggatt, Montgomery County, for their work on the forum.

The host division for the Valley Spring Network Forum was Buena Vista City Schools. The meeting was held at the Wilford P. Ramsey Educational Center. The evening started off with a reception hour that included a tour of the building and a viewing of all the art on display at the Center. The attendees were welcomed by student teachers who also provided the Center tours. In addition to school board members, members of the City Council and city staff were also in attendance. There were two guest speakers for the meeting. The first was Dr. John Keeler, Superintendent of Buena Vista City Public Schools, who highlighted how the division has turned a donated, abandoned store front into an educational center, with the help of the community. Dr. Steve Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction, VDOE also spoke to the members on the accountability reforms and profile of graduate that the state board is working on currently. Thank you to Valley Regional Chairman Teresa Ellison, Buena Vista City, and Vice Chairman Andrew Kohen, Harrisonburg City, for their hard work. Nominating Committee Members include Jacqueline Sullivan– Smoot from Page County, Roy Burns from Bath County, and Laura Kleiner from Staunton City.



I look forward to attending the remaining regional forums across the state later this spring. Thank you for your continued efforts for Virginia’s public schools.



Henrico County Public Schools Earns National Recognition

Magna Awards recognize innovation and excellence in public schools

Henrico County Public Schools are being recognized in the 23rd annual Magna Awards program sponsored by the National School Boards Association's *American School Board Journal*. The Magna Awards recognize school divisions and their leaders for taking bold and innovative steps to improve the lives of their students and their communities. An independent panel of school board members, administrators, and other educators selected the winners from over 200 submissions. **Only 33 school divisions nationwide were recognized.**



Henrico County Public Schools is a Magna Award Winner in the over 20,000 enrollment category for their *Rethinking Discipline* program. This program began with an overhaul of their Code of Student Conduct and shifted from the policy of zero tolerance to allowing administrators the flexibility to take into consideration the student's discipline history and other variables when considering suspension.

The school division reviewed its Code of Student Conduct through a two-year process, including hosting public input sessions and collaboration between the Student Support and Disciplinary Review Office and the Department of Instructional Support. The revised code that was rolled out for the 2015-2016 school year categorizes violations more thoroughly, and then prescribes a range of disciplinary or intervention options. There is also an increased emphasis on student supports and interventions.

Congratulations to Henrico County Public Schools for their recognition as a Magna Award winner in the 2017 Magna Awards.

For more information, visit <https://www.nsba.org/newsroom/american-school-board-journal/magna-awards/2017-first-place-winners>.

National Survey Honors School Districts for Pioneering Uses of Technology

Now in its 13th year, the Digital School Districts Survey Awards recognize exemplary use of technology by school boards and districts. The awards are presented by the Center for Digital Education at the National School Boards Association annual conference each spring.

Large Student Population District Category (12,000 students or more):

- 3rd Roanoke County Public Schools (*bottom left*)
- 10th Virginia Beach City Public Schools (*bottom right*)

Mid-sized Student Population Districts Category (3,000 - 12,000 students):

- 5th Charlottesville City Schools (*top right*)
- 6th Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools (*top left*)
- 8th Henry County Public Schools (*not pictured*)

For the full list of winners from 2016-2017, please visit: <http://www.centerdigitaled.com/awards/digital-districts/Digital-School-Districts-Survey-2016-17-winners.html>.



Charlottesville City School Board Member Named to CUBE Steering Committee

Leah Puryear was named to the Council of Urban Boards of Education's Steering Committee at the NSBA Annual Conference in Denver, CO. Leah has served eleven years on the Charlottesville City School Board and will be serving a three year term on the steering committee. Congratulations, Leah!



Ask the Legal Expert

Q. When does a school board member who is elected at a special election begin serving on the board?

A. As soon as they qualify. Thus, for example, someone who is elected at a special election held in November will normally begin their service as a school board member before the beginning of the next calendar year.

See previous "Ask the Legal Experts" online at http://www.vsba.org/services/legal_services/ask_the_experts/



THE VALUE OF MENTORING

Quality mentoring relationships can have a direct impact on your effectiveness as a school board member, both as a mentee who is learning the many aspects of school board service and as a mentor who is reflecting on their experience and looking for ways to continue their learning and growth.

To participate as a mentor or mentee, contact Brianna Hundley, coordinator of board development, at brianna@vsba.org or 434-295-8722.

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NSBA Annual Conference Recap

Almost 100 school board members and superintendents travelled from March 25-27 to Denver, Colorado to attend the National School Board Association's Annual Conference. The popular Virginia breakfast featured NSBA President Miranda Beard from Mississippi who spoke about being advocates for public education. The Virginia breakfast was generously sponsored by VMDO. Virginia had great representation at the Conference with multiple school divisions receiving awards and presenting breakout sessions highlighting programs in Virginia's public schools.



VSBA Affiliate Member Profiles

In each issue of the VSBA newsletter, we will feature three VSBA Affiliate Members. Thank you for your support of VSBA and Virginia's public education system.



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Visit http://www.vsba.org/resources/affiliates/affiliate_member_program/ for a complete list of VSBA's Affiliate Members.



Division Spotlight: Spotsylvania County Public Schools

In each newsletter VSBA will spotlight a recent initiative or best practice taking place in a school division in Virginia. If you have a story you would like to submit for inclusion in the spotlight section of the VSBA Newsletter, please contact Samantha Bosserman, director of communications and board development, for more information. We look forward to hearing about the great things going on in your divisions.

Region III Juniors & Seniors “Get Their Game On”

Submitted by Rene Daniels & Amber Belako, SCPS Office of Communication and Community Engagement

On November 9th, high school juniors and seniors from four school divisions participated in the 2nd Annual “Get Your Game On” event. This event was spearheaded by the Spotsylvania County Public Schools’ Office of Communication and Community Engagement and sponsored by the Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce’s Work Force NOW Committee. In its second year, the event has grown to include over 400 high school juniors and seniors from the counties of Caroline, Spotsylvania, and Stafford, and the City of Fredericksburg. In addition, more than 35 local businesses participate in the event.



This event brings high school students and local businesses together to offer students the opportunity to hone their job interviewing and networking skills. In addition to participating in mock interviews, students also attend workshop sessions on workplace readiness topics such as Customer Service & Networking, the Ins and Outs of Resume Writing, and How Social Media can Impact a Candidate’s Hopes of Landing a Job. New this year, students participated in an engagement activity to learn how to craft a 30-second elevator pitch about themselves.



The feedback from all participants – students, teachers, and businesses – continues to be overwhelming in support of continuing the event for a third year. Denny Fallon with Lockheed Martin was among the businesses that participated for the last two years and feels “The process was well laid-out and engaging with the youth ... It gives me hope for the future.” One of the attending teachers, Mrs. Suellen Venable-Shelton from Riverbend High School shared that

she felt the event, “truly was a success!” Participating students completed a survey at the conclusion of the event and 95% reported they would recommend this event to their friends.

If you would like more information about this event, please contact Rene Daniels or Amber Belako in the SCPS Office of Communication and Community Engagement (rdaniels@spotsylvania.k12.va.us or 540-834-2541, abelako@spotsylvania.k12.va.us or 540-834-2500 x1229).



FOLLOW VSBA ON SOCIAL MEDIA





Orientating New School Board Members to Your School Division

When a new school board member joins your governance team it is important to host a local orientation to not only welcome the new board member to the team, but to also inform him or her on important information for the school board. A state-wide orientation (such as the VSBA Orientation held in January/February and July each year) is a great way for the new member to learn about roles and responsibilities, but each board should also host a local orientation so that the new board member feels comfortable joining the team and can get up to speed on local happenings in your division.

VSBA has produced a guide on how local school boards can host a local orientation. This guide includes sample meeting agenda and documents that should be shared with the new school board member. Other items that should be included are a copy of your school board norms, past school board meeting agendas and minutes, the Code of Conduct, access to the division policy manual, and other general information about the division. This orientation should be hosted by the school board chairman in coordination with the division superintendent.

Hosting a local orientation is an important way to welcome your new school board member to your governance team and ensure that they have what they need to be a productive member of the team.

To access this guide, please [click here](#).

If your board needs assistance on creating school board norms or protocols, please contact VSBA at 1-800-446-8722.

Orientation: Building The Board Team



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May 8-12



Virginia Lottery

Teacher Appreciation Week

The Virginia Lottery is inviting Virginians to send thank-you notes to as many Virginia teachers as possible! Visit valottery.com/thankateacher starting April 3rd to send a thank-you note and learn how one lucky teacher will win a Virginia vacation!

thank a teacher

Teacher Appreciation Week



UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

April 20, 2017

[VSBA Hot Topic Conference](#)

LOCATION: Holiday Inn, Charlottesville
DETAIL: Attendees will hear from Phil Gore, Director of Leadership Team Services for the Texas Association of School Boards, on the hot topic issue of how school boards make a difference. Research demonstrates that beliefs and actions of school boards affect student outcomes. Consider how the mindsets and dispositions of board members affect student achievement. Come learn how boards in high achieving districts govern differently than those in lower achieving districts. Participants will also practice board governance skills related to improving student outcomes and develop action plans your board can implement to improve student outcomes in your division.

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****NEW DATE** May 3, 2017**

[VSBA Hot Topic Conference](#)

LOCATION: Wytheville Meeting Center, Wytheville
DETAIL: Come hear from Patty Pitts, assistant superintendent of teacher education and licensure for VDOE, and a panel of superintendents on the critical teacher shortage across the commonwealth. Also on the agenda is Craig Wood, Counsel for McGuireWoods LLP, with an analysis of reductions in the workforce. Lastly, David Brooks, Deputy Administrator for VACORP, will discuss workers' compensation and property/casualty claims in Virginia Public Schools and actions that school management teams can take to reduce accidents and lawsuits.

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May 17, 2017

[VSBA Webinar: Improving Education Services for Children and Youth with ASD in Public School Divisions through VCU Autism Center for Excellence](#)

LOCATION: Online
DETAIL: As autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has moved from a rare disability to become the 4th most common disability in Virginia, school districts and the Virginia Department of Education have struggled to keep pace with the needs of this heterogeneous population. In this webinar, we present a comprehensive, statewide systems change model that implements comprehensive online and live training combined with school division specific strategic planning. We will also present examples of the services provided through the Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence using the Bottom-up/Top-down model.

May 18, 2017

[VSBA Superintendent Evaluation Workshop](#)

LOCATION: VSBA Offices, Charlottesville
DETAIL: The Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Superintendents developed by the Virginia Department of Education provide a wealth of information regarding the requirements. Filtering through this document to determine what is required and what is optional requires focused attention. For some, the changes to their current evaluation model may be minor, while others face major revisions in order to be in compliance with the regulations. This workshop is designed to provide small group support to superintendents and board members responsible for updating their evaluation model. Participants will have the opportunity to review the guidelines in detail and then use them as they draft their own models. Individual consultation and support will be provided throughout the session as participants work on their revisions.

Current VSBA Superintendent Searches

Halifax County

For additional information on the VSBA Superintendent Search Services, please visit: http://www.vgba.org/services/superintendent_search_assistance/

2017 VSBA Regional Spring Network Forum Schedule

These meetings bring together board members, superintendents, and guests for dinner, networking, keynote speakers, legislative updates, and outstanding student entertainment. The Spring Network Forum features the presentation of the Regional Art Contest Winners. We encourage all to attend their regional meetings. This is a great opportunity to network with other board members in your region and share best practices.

CENTRAL—April 18, 2017 (Host Division: Charlottesville City)

NORTHEASTERN—April 19, 2017 (Host Division: Fairfax City)

SOUTHERN—April 25, 2017 (Host Division: Lynchburg City)

SOUTHWEST—April 26, 2017 (Host Division: Washington County)

TIDEWATER—May 1, 2017 (Host Division: Surry County)

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILED BROCHURES ON EACH FORUM!](#)



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Not pictured: Scott Albrecht, Camilla Washington

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VISION STATEMENT

VSBA is recognized and respected as an innovative leader in public education.

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