



VSBA President
R. Tyrone Foster
(Bristol City School Board)

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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DATES TO REMEMBER

January 14-15, 2019
VSBA Capital Conference

January 15, 2019
VSBA Orientation for New School Board Members, Superintendents, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

January 23, 2019
Free Webinar: Virginia Lottery – 30 Years of Fun, \$9B to Education

January 30, 2019
Webinar: Title IX

MEET TYRONE FOSTER, VSBA'S NEW PRESIDENT

Why did you first decide to serve on your local school board and why have you continued to serve all these years?

My oldest daughter had just started elementary school and I helped my wife serve on the PTA awhile she was President. I then followed her in the role as PTA President. After that I felt like I wanted to be more involved in the education process outside of PTA to not only make a difference, but to be the difference. We had a great school board at that time so I wasn't trying to replace anyone, however when an incumbent decided not to run I took the opportunity and ran as a write-in and won. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a board member because of my love for children and also for the desire to make my city a better place to live.

When you were a student, was there an educator who made a profound difference in your education experience?

There were several teachers and coaches that made an impact in my life because if you look back at role models besides your parents more than likely it would be a teacher. I was fortunate and can name many teachers, but one that stood out was my 5th Grade teacher Ann Fleming. She was a brand new teacher and grew up in the City of Bristol. What made her profound was that she visited each of her student's homes and met with their parents. Even though she lived in the more affluent part of the city, she was not afraid to step out of her comfort zone so she could understand her students. She even invited all of us to her home for a class picnic/cookout

What achievements are you most proud of in your division?

The achievement that I am most proud of in our school division is the increased graduation rate. I am also proud of the fact that as a division we have become a more integral part of the community as we have acquired programs to provide breakfast, lunch and dinner to our students, because you cannot learn on an empty stomach. The way we have tackled the challenging environment is to never ask "how come", but "why not"!

What challenges has your division faced in your time on the board?

Funding! Equity! A zip code should never matter when it comes to educating the students of this Commonwealth.

Why is VSBA membership valuable?

Membership is valuable because of the many resources that the VSBA provides. This includes needed training for new School Board Members and Superintendents, personalized training for the entire governance team, policy services to assist local boards ensure they are up to date on their policies at the state and federal levels, assisting with Superintendent Searches, and a wealth of information on day to day board operations.

What does being elected VSBA President mean to you?

I was raised with the attitude of trying to excel in everything you do. As a School Board Member each of us should want to accept the position as board chairman and then, if possible, serve on the State association board. The VSBA President is the pinnacle. It means you are representing the entire association and it is indeed a great honor.

What do you hope to accomplish as VSBA President?

Find ways to continue to focus on student achievement, promote equity across the state, continue to develop a relationship with Legislators, and to solidify the mission of VSBA, leadership, advocacy and support.

What advice do you have for new school board members?

Be The Difference! Anyone can make a difference but, if you are approachable, available and a good listener then you become the difference. One person is not going to solve the world's problems but, if you are that difference in one person's life then you have made an impact.



Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The VSBA represents our member boards' interests before the state legislature, Congress, state and federal agencies and the administrations at both levels of government. The VSBA realizes that every member board is different and we understand that one size does not fit all when it comes to serving our member boards.

Founded in 1906, VSBA is a very successful association with a long tradition of serving our members. The primary goal of the association has always been the advancement of education through local control of, and accountability for, the public schools throughout the state. The association represents the collective work of 133 elected/appointed school boards that are directly accountable to the communities they serve. Our strength lies in remaining true to our mission as a member-driven association that provides member school boards with leadership, advocacy and support to exercise effective leadership in public school governance.

The annual VSBA Delegate Assembly is one of the most important activities of the association. The legislative agenda your delegates adopted at the annual convention includes the collective insight of every board in the association that is represented at the delegate assembly. The legislative positions adopted at the delegate assembly identify the positions of the association so that that staff have guidance when supporting/opposing legislation on various issues. VSBA is an association of school boards and represents the viewpoints of schools boards as determined by their representative to the delegate assembly.

The revised legislative positions of the association have been adopted, and are being printed in the 2019 VSBA Legislative Positions handbook. Because of our commitment to environmental awareness and sustainability only the school board clerk will be sent a copy for the Board's use. The entire contents of the unabridged handbook is available online on the [VSBA website](#).

Thank you for your understanding, leadership and support. I look forward to seeing you all at the Capital Conference on January 14 & 15 in Richmond. Happy Holidays!

VSBA Delegate Assembly Update

The Delegate Assembly met on November 15 to consider eleven new or amended legislative position proposals. Complete copies of all the proposals were provided to every school board member in the Delegate Assembly Handbook, which was distributed via email on October 1st. Beth Hardy, chairman of the Legislative Positions Committee and Goochland County School Board member, presented the report of the 2018 Legislative Positions Committee which detailed the committee's diligent work. The proposed amended positions covered a wide variety of topics including school safety, student mental health, At-Risk Add-On funding, and student access to internships/apprenticeships.

2018 VSBA President Scott Albrecht gave the Delegates the option of considering the eleven proposals as a block or removing individual proposals for separate consideration. No proposals were removed from the block and the Delegate Assembly voted to adopt all the proposals.

VSBA Legislative Priorities

On Friday, December 7 the VSBA Board of Directors approved the [2019 Legislative Priorities](#) found [here](#). These priorities are where staff will spend extra efforts throughout the 2019 General Assembly Session.



A Successful November as “Take Your Legislator to School” Month

By Samantha Bosserman, director of communications and board development

Once again, Governor Northam proclaimed November as “VSBA Take Your Legislator to School” month. To promote a closer relationship between public education and Virginia Legislators, the VSBA urged each school division to invite their elected officials to visit their schools during the month of November. The outpouring of responses that we saw and heard from you was staggering. We wanted to share a small selection of the many successful visits and meetings you had with your legislators.

Culpeper County Public Schools

Senator Emmett Hanger, Delegate Nick Freitas, Delegate Michael Webern, and Mark Sneseavage Legislative Director for Senator Bryce Reeves attended a Legislator Luncheon hosted by the school division. The meal was prepared and served by the Culpeper County Culinary Arts students. The representatives discussed topics including VRS, teacher salaries, and the Internet Sales Tax.



Middlesex County Public Schools

Middlesex County Public Schools welcomed Delegate Keith Hodges who took time to sit down and discuss the legislative process with students. Delegate Hodges also heard from Compass Academy students about what they wanted for their community.



Surry County Public Schools

Delegates Emily Brewer and Cliff Hayes, Jr. visited Surry County Public Schools and spoke with 12th and 7th grade students at a planned assembly which included a Q & A. The Delegates then toured the High School and Elementary School where they visited the Agriculture Department, discussed challenges and successes with career and technical education, and more. Students even produced a video of the visit while the Delegates were on site.



Madison County Public Schools

Madison County Public Schools hosted Delegate Nick Freitas and Senator Emmett Hanger who spoke at Madison County Middle School and William Wetsel Middle School. Students were able to ask questions of each of the Legislators and learned about the legislative process.



Thank you all for sharing your stories and photos from Take Your Legislator to School Month. We look forward to another successful event in November 2019.



VSBA Employer Commendation Program

Thank your employer for supporting you and your work as a school board member! The VSBA Employer Commendation Program is designed to thank the employers of school board members for providing the support, encouragement, and time that is often needed to perform school board duties. Upon the recommendation of any Virginia school board member who is employed full-time, the VSBA executive director will send a letter of commendation to the board member's employer and a certificate suitable for framing and display. These commendations serve to remind employers that school board service is an essential and demanding avocation; encourage constructive dialogue concerning local education topics; reinforce the employer's existing commitment to school board service; and encourage other employees to consider participating in the educational process or to lend their support to those who do.



Please complete the [online form](#) by January 18, 2019. Letters and certificates will be mailed to recommended employers in February (VSBA School Board Appreciation Month).

Questions? Contact Alicia Trice, coordinator of special projects at alicia@vsba.org or 434-295-8722

Employer Commendation Form

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019EmployerCommendation>



Food is Everywhere this Time of Year

It can be difficult to stay on track with your diet plan and eat healthy. But, with BPA's BestLife diet diaries available through the member portal, staying on the 'nice' and healthy list this holiday season has never been easier!

Learn more at www.bpatpa.com

97.8%

In the
2018
VSBA
Member
Opinion

Survey 97.8% of respondents listed that they Strongly Agree or Agree that VSBA is a trusted resource on issues that affect good governance.

FOLLOW VSBA ON SOCIAL MEDIA





Division Spotlight: Westmoreland 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.

Virginia's First Lady Pamela Northam Visits Westmoreland County Schools

Submitted by Patty Kelly Long, Westmoreland County Public Schools

You can really tell when someone truly cares about children. When Virginia's First Lady Pamela Northam stepped into Cople Elementary School, she paused briefly to say hello to some adults, then it was all about teachers and students. Mrs. Northam posed for pictures, and shook hands with teachers and staff as she made her way down the art filled hallways of Cople Elementary. Peeking into every classroom, Mrs. Northam beamed with glee as youngsters waved at her and shook her hand. As she reached the Pre-K classroom, there was a loud cheer and applause from the tiny students as they greeted their special guest.



It was hard to tell who was more excited about the visit. Even though Mrs. Northam had visited many schools from the Commonwealth's eight superintendent's regions, her indefatigable enthusiasm as she greeted the students made her visit special. As Mrs. Northam read from *The Big Animal Book* she encouraged the children to act out animal sounds, wiggle their tails, show their claws, and snake tongues. She laughed out loud at their various antics and lucky students were asked to come up and stand by her to show off their animal skills. It was a wonderful education moment for all of the students.

As part of the tour, Mrs. Northam brought gifts for every class that included school supplies for the teachers and a beautiful book for each child. As noted in Mrs. Northam's official site, the purpose of the tour was to celebrate early childhood education programs and elementary schools and discussing the importance of school readiness.



The First Lady was accompanied by several of her staff including Chief School Readiness Officer Jenna Conway. Another special guest was Mr. Edward Reed, Chief of Staff for the Lieutenant Governor Justin Fairfax. Mr. Reed attended Cople Elementary School as a child and had many fond memories to share with the children and staff. He is a graduate of Washington & Lee High School. Mrs. Northam told the children that they could grow up and be just like Mr. Reed.

After reading to the Head Start Pre-K children, Mrs. Northam visited the three VPI Pre-K classes at Cople. All the VPI classes had gathered in Ms. Quinn's classroom and were equally excited to visit with Mrs. Northam. After her Cople visit, Mrs. Northam visited Washington District Elementary School and its two pre-K groups.

At Washington District Elementary School, Mrs. Northam surprised some children while they were eating lunch. She talked to youngsters standing in lines and actively encouraged students to tell her about themselves. The VPI Pre-K groups she read to enthusiastically listened to the animal story and giggled at all the pictures and voice inflections. When finished, one student clung to Mrs. Northam and asked her to read another story. Unfortunately, her schedule would not allow that, but she encouraged the student to take the book home and read it with her parent.

First Lady Pamela Northam stated earlier, "Many of us can still remember the excitement of getting that shiny new folder and new shoes for the first day of school, but school readiness actually starts in those important years before kindergarten, when around 90 percent of a child's brain development occurs. All Virginia children are capable of, and deserve to be, entering education programs and providing access to quality care and education for children and families no matter who they are or where in the Commonwealth they live."

Westmoreland County Public Schools thanked Mrs. Northam and her staff for visiting our school system. It was a special day for our Pre-K students and their teachers and was appreciated by the administration.





2018 Annual Convention Highlights

2018 VSBA High School Student Video Contest Winners Announced

The VSBA's seventh annual student video contest challenged high school students across Virginia to create a 30-second video around the theme of "Why Teachers Are Important." The first, second and third place winners, selected out of 35 submissions, were announced at the opening general session of the VSBA Annual Convention in Williamsburg, VA, and the videos were shown to the convention's attendees.

1st Place: ["Why Teachers Are Important"](#)

Manassas Park High School (Manassas Park City Public Schools) - Orion Dege



2nd Place: ["Teachers Mold Our Future"](#)

Arlington Career Center (Arlington County Public Schools) - Sebastian Duall, Jordan Flores, & John Campbell

3rd Place: ["Teachers Lead the Way"](#)

Fluvanna County High School (Fluvanna County Public Schools) - Katie Morris, Madison Kennedy & Kevin Burruss

Honorable Mention: ["Why We Need Them The Most"](#)

Osborn Park High School (Prince William County Public Schools) - Abigail Kensky, Hope Shubert, Ashley Moynagh, Gabriel Gonzalez, and Santiel Valdes Said



2018 VSBA Green Schools Challenge Winners Announced

Three school divisions received top awards in the 2018 VSBA Green Schools Challenge, a friendly competition designed to encourage implementation of specific environmental policies and practical actions that reduce the carbon emissions generated by both the local school division and the broader community. This is the tenth year the awards were given out, and the challenge was sponsored by Moseley Architects and ABM Building & Energy Solutions.

Patrick County Public Schools
(Student Population Under 5,000)

Manassas City Public Schools
(Student Population 5,001 – 10,000)

Fairfax County Public Schools
(Student Population 10,001 & Up)



Macy Montgomery, Rappahannock County School Board Student Representative Awarded VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship

Applications for the competitive VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship were made available to spring 2019 graduating seniors who had served as a student school board representative during their junior or senior year. This year one student was selected for a scholarship, and we took a moment to discuss her service on the school board and what receiving the scholarship means for her future.

Why were you interested in serving as the student representative on the school board?

I was interested in serving as the student school board representative because of my genuine love for all fellow students. I wanted to communicate the students' thoughts and aspirations concerning Rappahannock County High School. I also wanted to get to know the adults that help make the high school a better place for both the staff and students.

What has been your most memorable experience serving as the student representative on the school board?

The most memorable experience that I have had as a student representative is the level of respect and trust that I have been given from the adults of the school board and school. They allow me to feel welcome in the school board meetings and entrust me with responsibilities that are not given to other students.

What does receiving the VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship mean to you?

It is an honor to be able to receive the VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship. This scholarship will assist me in the next phase of my life. Monetarily, the scholarship funds will go toward college loans, ultimately leading me toward my career in medicine. Emotionally, the scholarship funds gives me confidence that I will accomplish this goal.

What do you hope to do after high school graduation?

After I graduate high school, I plan on attending a four-year institution where I will be able to perform scientific research. My goal is to receive my PhD and become a medical scientist. Because of my diagnosis with Type One Diabetes, I have been driven to learn more about the disease and help others in similar situations. My deep care for humanity has led me to choose this career in medicine.



Silver sponsors Ameresco, Mountain Valley Transportation and Johnson Controls sponsored this year's scholarship program.

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2018 Annual Convention Highlights



3 Architectural Projects Earn State Awards; RRMM Architects Wins “People’s Choice Award”

Three architectural firms were recognized in the 2018 VSBA *Exhibition of School Architecture*. Winning projects were selected from 13 entries submitted by 7 architectural firms in the areas of new construction, renovation and adaptive use of existing space. Recognized designs and firms are:

AWARD: Platinum Design Award
FIRM: VMDO Architects
PROJECT: Bluestone Elementary School
DIVISION: Harrisonburg City Public Schools



AWARD: Gold Design Award
FIRM: RRMM Architects
PROJECT: Meadow View Elementary School
DIVISION: Henry County Public Schools

AWARD: Silver Design Award
FIRM: VMDO Architects
PROJECT: Elon W. Rhodes Early Learning Center
DIVISION: Harrisonburg City Public Schools

In addition, RRMM Architects’ work on Meadow View Elementary School in Henry County won the firm the “People’s Choice Award.”

First Citizens Bank sponsored the *VSBA Exhibition of School Architecture*.





2018 Annual Convention Highlights

Orange County School Board Receives VSBA Board of Distinction Recognition

VSBA Past President Scott Albrecht presented the Orange County School Board with the VSBA Board of Distinction award. In order to earn the VSBA Board of Distinction, the school board members must meet the challenge of leadership in categories that include planning, policy, promotion, and board development.



Please [click here](#) to view a short video testimonial from Sherrie Page, Orange County School Board Chairman and Dr. Cecil Snead, Orange County Schools Superintendent



Fairfax County School Board Member Janie Strauss Receives VSBA Advocate for Education Award

VSBA Past President Scott Albrecht presented Fairfax County School Board Member Janie Strauss with the VSBA Advocate for Education Award. This award was created to recognize board members who have demonstrated significant and outstanding leadership, commitment, and contribution to public education that has had an impact on their region and the Commonwealth, and who have shown active involvement in local, state, and federal advocacy on behalf of their division, VSBA, and public education. This is the fourth year this award has been presented.

Campbell County, Franklin County, Suffolk City and Washington County Board Members Receive VSBA Quarter Century Award in Recognition of 25 Years of School Board Service

Bill Brooks (Washington County School Board), and P.D. Hambrick (Franklin County School Board) were each presented with the VSBA Quarter Century Award in recognition of 25 years of consecutive service on their school boards. At the VSBA Awards Luncheon, Leon Brandt (Campbell County School Board) and Lorraine Skeeter (Suffolk City School Board) (not pictured) were also recognized for earning the Quarter Century Award.





VSBA Affiliate Member Profiles

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



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UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

January 14-15, 2019

VSBA Capital Conference

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott, Richmond

DETAIL: Advocacy by local school board members is a year-round job and even more important during the General Assembly. We will kick off the two-day conference with an overview of the governor's budget, commentary on the new political scene both in Virginia and nationally, and VSBA's legislative priorities. Then join us in the evening for a reception that will provide you with an opportunity to mix and mingle with your legislators and top administration officials. The events on day one will help prepare you for your legislative meetings after breakfast on day two.

Sponsored by:



January 15, 2019

VSBA Orientation for New Board Members & Superintendents

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott, Richmond

DETAIL: Becoming a new school board member or superintendent is an honor and a privilege. Enjoy a successful and less stressful transition by attending the VSBA Orientation for New Board Members & Superintendents. Many important topics will be covered, including ethics, school law, parliamentary procedure, budgets, board/superintendent roles, teamwork, and more. Don't miss this popular event, now with extended sessions, which is a "must" for all new board members and superintendents!

Sponsored by:



January 15, 2019

VSBA Orientation for New Chairmen & Vice-Chairmen

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott, Richmond

DETAIL: Have you recently been selected as your school board's new chairman or vice-chairman? If so, don't miss the VSBA Orientation for New Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen, which has been especially designed to help you become more comfortable with your new role and responsibilities. Experts in a variety of areas will address many important topics, such as the legal authority of the chairman, handling media inquiries, parliamentary procedure, optimizing the chair/superintendent relationship, and ethical considerations as a board chair. You will also have the opportunity to network with other new chairmen and vice-chairmen from across Virginia.

Sponsored by:



January 23, 2019

FREE WEBINAR: Virginia Lottery: 30 Years of Fun, \$9B to Education

LOCATION: Online

DETAIL: Did you know that 100% of Virginia Lottery proceeds support public education K-12 in the Commonwealth? Join a Virginia Lottery representative to learn more about how Lottery dollars support your education community.

January 30, 2019

WEBINAR: Title IX- Best Practices in Training and Compliance

LOCATION: Online

DETAIL: With claims of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct hitting newsstands everywhere, Title IX coordinators and other senior staff need to be confident in their knowledge and enforcement of their divisions' policies. Prevention and thorough investigations are the best ways to manage risk and foster a safe and healthy school environment. Participants will learn the basics of Title IX, best practices regarding Title IX policies, and recent case law relating to sexual harassment of students, gender discrimination, and employee training requirements.

February 20, 2019

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

Colonial Heights Public Schools

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



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MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

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