

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

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DATES TO REMEMBER

November 20-22, 2019
VSBA Annual Convention— [Register Now!](#)

December 4, 2019
FREE Webinar:
ASSETS Program

December 11-12, 2019
VSBA Webinar Series:
Budget & Finance 101

January 13-14, 2020
Capital Conference

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is so hard to believe that my year as VSBA President will soon be ending. It has happened so fast I feel like I am in the Wizard of Oz in the tornado, but I am so glad that I landed in the Emerald City, the Virginia School Boards Association, with such a great group of board members like you. I would like to thank everyone who attended the VSBA Legislative Advocacy Conference in Chesterfield on September 24th. It was a great conference with another great line up of presenters assembled together by VSBA Executive Director Gina Patterson and her staff. This was also an opportunity for board members to get the newly required training for COIA, for elected school board members only.

This month is Bullying Prevention Month and I hope that everyone has had the opportunity in their local divisions to hold programs and events on how to not only address bullying but to bring an end to it. Although a month is set aside to recognize this, it is a daily battle and one that should be addressed every day and month of the school year. We will also recognize November as Take Your Legislator to School Month. We all know that advocacy is something that we should do all year. Our students and teachers are our greatest resource, but they need a voice. I challenge you all to reach out to your Legislators, bring them in your schools, hold events, and show them what you as school board members are fighting for. Also make sure to show them the great things you are doing with the resources that you have. This is the time before they head to Richmond that you could challenge them not only to make a difference but to "Be the Difference".

The VSBA Annual Convention is scheduled for November 20th-22nd in Williamsburg. I hope you all have secured your registrations for this great event, including a great early bird session. Remember you must register for the early bird session separately. I also hope to see all golfers on Tuesday morning at the Annual Golf Tournament sponsored by Moseley Architects, and then on Thursday morning the entire membership at the VSBA 5K Walk/Run sponsored by Quinn Evans. It looks like it is going to be the best Annual Convention yet with all the presenters and topics secured by the VSBA staff. I am so looking forward to seeing each of you in Williamsburg.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Scott Albrecht for his transitional leadership and all the help that he provided me this year as VSBA Past President. Scott's experience on the Board of Directors was instrumental in assisting me in gaining the knowledge for the guidance I needed. Again, thank you Scott. I also want to thank Gina Patterson and her staff. There is no way that this year would have been so successful and fun without their leadership and guidance. The ladies and J.T. were broad shoulders that I leaned on constantly and they never let me down. Thank you again Gina and your staff. I also want to say congratulations to Rodney Jordan who will be your next VSBA President. Rodney is a very hardworking and enthusiastic gentleman who I am sure will make his mark on this great Association.

Finally, I want to say thank you to the VSBA Board of Directors and each one of you that has given me this chance to represent you. It has been an honor and a privilege for me to serve as your VSBA President over the last year. As I said last November, I am truly humbled and thank each of you for the kind words and support for making me feel like the luckiest man on earth. I also want to say thank you again for accepting my challenge to "Be the Difference". As we move forward, please remember that anyone can make a difference, but it takes a special person to "Be the Difference". Thank you for always being that "special person".

TF



Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The VSBA Annual Convention held November 20-22 in Williamsburg is the largest educational gathering for school board members and superintendents in Virginia. This year's Convention will be jam-packed with learning opportunities for school board members. This means more breakout sessions, lunch and learn sessions, hot educational topics, and more like-minded people to discuss your issues and successes with and to give new perspectives.

The staff has worked very hard to select an exciting lineup of breakout sessions to capture the interest of ALL attendees. There are lots of new sessions as well as highly rated breakout sessions from the past.

Prepare to be inspired by the three keynote speakers, who will expand your perspective and motivate new levels of leadership. The convention will kick off with Dr. Luvelle Brown who will be facilitating a panel discussion with some of Virginia's own public school students representing divisions from across the Commonwealth. Thursday's General Session features Dr. Tim Hodges who will discuss best practices for addressing the challenges facing education. The Convention will wrap up with Dr. Steven Constantino who will share with us the five principles of effective family engagement.

This year's Early Bird Session featuring Dr. John Draper will address the public perception of public schools.

Make sure your entire governance team attends the Annual Convention. You will have the rare opportunity to spend time learning together, discussing session content and building your team.

To view information on all of the workshops, general sessions and activities going on at the 2019 VSBA Annual Convention, visit: <https://2019vsbaannualconvention.sched.com/>

We look forward to seeing you in November.

GP

Create a Personalized Convention Schedule with VSBA SCHED

VSBA continues to use a mobile-friendly schedule that allows you to view details of the VSBA Annual Convention from your computer at home or from your mobile device. This program allows you to create a profile and select which sessions you are interested in attending at the convention. Through the program you can view the presentation description, biographies of the session presenters, sort the sessions by topic track and more.

To create a profile, and begin making your personalized convention schedule, visit <https://2019vsbaannualconvention.sched.com/>

In the upper right hand corner you will see "sign up". Follow the instructions to create an account, and begin building your personalized schedule! You can also see which other attendees are interested in similar sessions, once they create a profile and add a session to their schedule. Once your profile is saved and your sessions are added to your schedule, you can access your schedule on your mobile device, or even print out the information to bring it with you to Williamsburg.

Don't worry, you will not be held to attend any of the sessions that you select, so feel free to update your schedule as often as you would like.

VSBA hopes that the VSBA Annual Convention SCHED will assist you in making your Annual Convention experience as seamless as possible.

If you have any questions about VSBA SCHED, please contact Jaime Grove, coordinator of board development at 1-800-446-8722 or jaime@vsba.org.

Thank you to BoardDocs for sponsoring SCHED.

The screenshot shows the VSBA SCHED mobile app interface. At the top, there is the VSBA logo (Virginia School Boards Association) and the BoardDocs logo (A Diligent Brand). Below the logos, the date "Wednesday, Nov 20" is displayed. The schedule is organized by time slots and location:

- 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM (Tidewater):** "Paddling Upstream in a Public School Canoe" with Moderator Tyrone Foster and Speaker Dr. John Draper. This is an Early Bird Session.
- 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM (Allegheny):** "Workshop for Student School Board Representatives" (Student School Board Representative Workshop).
- 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM (Woodlands Cascades):** "VSBA/COSA Meeting" (VSBA/COSA Meeting).
- 12:00 - 1:45 PM (Piedmont Room):** "Awards Luncheon (invited attendees)" with Speakers Scott Albrecht and Sponsors VMDO.



November is “VSBA Take Your Legislator to School” Month



J.T. Kessler
VSBA Government
Relations Specialist

To promote a closer relationship between public education and the Virginia State Legislature, the Virginia School Boards Association urges each school division in the state to invite at least one of their state legislators to visit their schools during the month of November. There are many benefits from participating in VSBA Take Your Legislator to School Month, including developing closer relationships between school divisions, local communities and our elected officials, as well as creating opportunities for productive dialogue so that educational and political leaders can work together to ensure that we provide the best possible education for our students. In addition, when legislators visit your schools as part of VSBA Take Your Legislator to School Month, local students will have the opportunity to interact with elected officials and learn about the important roles and responsibilities of Virginia General Assembly members. Almost like a field trip that is coming to your school, a visit by your local legislator creates many different “teachable moments.”

Every year, legislators serving in the General Assembly meet to discuss issues of concern to their constituents and the Commonwealth. Hearing directly from community leaders like you helps inform and craft the legislative agenda during session. When meeting with your elected representatives, feel free to engage in frank and honest conversations on both your successes and the challenges you face in education today. Issues like workforce development, challenging school environments, student discipline, and teacher recruitment and retention are all likely to be addressed in one way or another this coming January. This is your opportunity to seize the initiative.

We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen the already solid bond between public education and the Virginia General Assembly. These activities cannot help but aid VSBA as it lobbies on your behalf on education issues. Thank you for all that you do as a leader, advocate, and supporter of public education.



[Click to view a VSBA Take Your Legislator to School Month PSA with VSBA President Tyrone Foster](#)

[RESOURCE GUIDE](#)
[SCHOOL DIVISION EXAMPLES](#)
[PROCLAMATION](#)

Virginia Names 2020 Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Andrea Carson Johnson, 2020 Virginia Teacher of the Year. Andrea is a 12-year veteran and teaches 12th grade English at Salem High School in Salem, Virginia. Pictured here with Andrea is Dr. James Coleman, Lynchburg City, VSBA Southern Region Chair, who served on the selection panel representing the VSBA. Also pictured with Dr. Coleman is Dr. James Lane, Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction. To view the full news release [click here](#).



Current VSBA Superintendent Searches

**Galax City
Surry County**

For additional information on the VSBA Superintendent Search Services, please visit the [VSBA Website](#).



Samantha Bosserman
VSBA Director of
Communications and Board
Development

Working with Your Local Newspaper

Newspapers, while they may be fleeting, still have profound influence on the story of your school division. The print circulation may be shrinking, but the online reach is growing. With the addition of robust websites and e-editions, newspapers produce many of the stories that are featured on social media and in the community.

An editorial board operates independently from the news-reporting and news-editing staff. Editorials are a way that newspapers exert civic leadership by examining issues and seeking answers. Often unsigned, the articles represent the view of the editorial board, not the newspaper staff as a whole and appear on the newspaper’s Opinion, Editorial, Viewpoints, or similar page.

A well-informed editorial board can be a great asset. Its members know the community, keep up on issues, and aren’t afraid to take strong stands. Editorials inform readers, present the editorial board’s view, and spur readers to action. They can advance a school division’s cause and help explain a controversial decision. On the other side, they can also blindside a school division, shaping community opinion against the division. Constant and savvy communications encourage the former and deter the latter.

Like all trusting relationships, they develop over time. Start by arranging editorial board meetings on cycles that make sense for both the board and the school division. Here are a few tips to get started: Op/Ed pages usually list whom to contact. Have a representative call or email that person to set up a meeting. Be concise but specific on why you want to meet. Never call on a Friday- Editorial page editors have a full weekend of opinion pages to produce and are even busier than usual. Put together a short-bulleted list of your key points. Email it to your editorial board contact ahead of time and bring copies to the meeting. Expect tough questions. Gather statistics from your division staff ahead of time to prepare for the meeting. If possible, ensure someone from the division leadership team is available to attend the meeting as well for day-to-day operations questions.

Expect a discussion. Do not come into the meeting with an agenda that you expect the editorial board to follow. Go with the flow. Editorial board members will meet in private after the meeting and decide the newspaper’s viewpoint.

Adapted from an article in CommunicationsPlus, a VSBA subscription publication for school division communications. Contact Samantha Bosserman for information on subscribing.



SCHOOL BOARD NEWS Podcast

Addressing important and interesting education-related content, such as school finance, advocacy, good governance, innovation, and more in under 15 minutes.

We know how busy you are so tune in to hear updates, tips, and interviews that you can listen to anytime, anywhere.

To Listen Visit: http://www.vsba.org/services/vsba_school_board_news_podcast/



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.

Smith Station Sharks Make Inclusiveness Part of their School Culture

Submitted by Spotsylvania County Public Schools



Every March the Smith Station Elementary School Sharks focus on inclusionary practices and how they are ensuring all students are included each and every day. School Inclusion month celebrates the progress that schools have made in providing a supportive and quality education to an increasingly diverse student population. It also provides an important opportunity for educators, students and parents to discuss what else needs to be done in order to ensure that their schools continue to improve their ability to successfully educate all children.

At SSES, the celebration of inclusion began as a compilation of student essays about what inclusion means and has evolved into a month-long, school-wide celebration of all students and staff, embracing differences and acknowledging how everyone is an important part of the school. This year school staff worked with students to create daily morning announcements with daily tips on how to be inclusive each day. Students completed projects focused on what "inclusion" means to them and how they can be respectful towards others. On March 5, the school created a Chain of Reaction of Inclusion and Respect which is comprised of paper chains made by students that include pledges of how they can be supportive, inclusive, and respectful. The Chain encircled the inside of the building and was displayed in the halls so everyone could see it.

The highlight of this year's celebration was a video message that was posted on YouTube from Micah Fowler, star of the TV show 'Speechless' and actor with Cerebral Palsy. The special message was one of congratulations and encouragement and can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeekOOD0II&feature=youtu.be>





American Education Week: November 18-22, 2019

American Education Week—November 18-22, 2019—is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate public education and honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every child receives a quality education. The National Education Association (NEA) has an online tool kit including promotional materials, background information, activity ideas, media tips and more. That tool kit can be found at www.nea.org/aew

2019's theme will be reflected in special observances each day of the 2019 weeklong celebration:

- Monday, November 18, 2019: **Kickoff Day**
- Tuesday, November 19, 2019: **Parents Day**
- Wednesday, November 20, 2019: **Education Support Professionals Day**
- Thursday, November 21, 2019: **Educator for a Day**
- Friday, November 22, 2019: **Substitute Educators Day**

Read more about the [history of American Education Week](#).



VSBA Profile in Leadership— Meet Raymond Whitaker, VSBA Eastern Region Chair

What is your hometown?

My hometown is Tappahannock, VA in Essex County.

How long have you been a school board member?

I have been on my school board since 2007, 12 years.

What/who inspires you?

My inspiration is Ronnie Gill, who did not want to be a part of an elected process.

What is your motto as a board member?

My motto is: "Educate every single child"

What is your advice for new school board members?

My advice to new school board members is students first, and no exceptions.

What do you consider your greatest accomplishment as a board member?

I would say my greatest accomplishment as a board member is being the voice of reason.

What is your pie-in-the-sky vision for education?

My pie-in-the-sky vision is no failures, no absenteeism, no suspensions.

What do you feel is the best benefit of being a member of VSBA?

I believe the best benefit of VSBA is the advocacy that is done on behalf of school boards across the Commonwealth.

How do you define advocacy?

Advocacy is someone who speaks or acts on behalf of another, or someone who pleads or argues the case of another.

What made you want to get involved in advocacy?

It all started when I became a math tutor in college. That act was the genesis of my desire to give back to fellow man or woman.

Why is advocacy important to you and your role as a school board member?

Advocacy is important to me in my role because as a school board member, I have a platform to make lives better, a chance to help others reach for the sky, and to make life better than the way they found it.

Advocacy can be intimidating to some people. What advice do you have for them on ways to gradually become more engaged in advocacy?

Attend school activities. Little verbal exchanges can start a volume of thank you. Talk to other board members. Allow yourself to get caught up in a worthy cause. A journey is one step at a time.

What is the most challenging aspect of advocacy and how do you work to overcome it?

I believe the most challenging aspect of advocacy is a lack of knowledge. You overcome this by getting involved, persevering, inviting interaction, and keeping hope alive.



Raymond Whitaker
Essex County School Board
VSBA Board of Directors
Eastern Region Chair



Failure to Govern

Bad Board Behavior Equals Poor Student Performance

by Ivan J. Lorentzen and William P. McCaw

This is the third of a four-part series of articles on school board performance and its impact on student success, written by education management expert and psychology professor Ivan J. Lorentzen and educational leadership professor William P. McCaw.

Since public education in America is under state and local control, school boards take pride in exercising their independence. This allows boards to tailor schools to reflect local communities. This also produces significant disparity among school districts. However, many aspects of schools are remarkably similar. Third grade is pretty much the same everywhere. So is teacher and administrative training and certification.

But school board membership is different. Since board members come from all walks of life, it is not surprising that their opinions vary widely regarding how a school should function, how a board should behave, and what issues should be addressed. Today, a growing research effort is producing reliable data about the kind of boardsmanship related to higher student achievement across the district. Boards that govern districts with higher achievement scores are best described by the essential elements detailed in the Board Self-Assessment Survey (BSAS) (see April 2017 Texas Lone Star, page 8, for specifics). Boards and the districts they govern that have yet to address low student achievement continue to be derailed by errors in governance. Recent research has begun to identify specific behaviors that serve to distract school boards from their primary mission of improving student achievement.

What Some Critics Are Saying

School board critics have a long list of grievances about the failings of public schools, reserving particular blame for school boards. Former US Secretary of Education William Bennett once accused the public school bureaucracy of resisting change in order to maintain the status quo.¹ He referred to the leaders of public education as the “blob” (bloated educational bureaucracy) and called for reforms to “shrink the blob.” He advocated putting education in the hands of corporations, city mayors, or private enterprise, which he thought were more efficient entities. Districts that have experimented with such reforms, however, report mixed results in terms of financial efficiency or improved achievement scores.

In 2003, Paul Hill, founder of the Center on Reinventing Public Education, identified one particularly troubling way in which individual board members can cause mischief.² Not only do board members have the power to disrupt schools, he wrote, they often gain personally from doing so. This gains favor with special-interest factions within the community. Such behavior by

one member breaks down the self-restraint of other board members, who themselves begin initiating their own, not the district’s, agendas for change. Board members who engage in such actions must realize that their behavior is associated with lower student achievement.

In addition, Chester Finn, president of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, called school boards an “outrage” and advocated “putting this dysfunctional arrangement out of its misery and moving on to something that will work for children.”³ However, the alternative structure designed to replace the publically elected school board that might produce better results at lower costs has yet to materialize.

Is it possible the critics are right? Are school boards partially responsible for low student achievement scores? Recent research has begun to answer this question.

Governing ‘from the Mezzanine’

School boards should focus on district governance and not be involved in administrative leadership. It’s been said that the board governs the district “from the mezzanine,” where it steers the district forward while delegating administrative matters to the superintendent.

Hiring and evaluating the superintendent is one of the most important jobs of the board. Once the superintendent is hired, the board must clarify expectations for the district’s direction and then delegate leadership of the district to the superintendent. It is the superintendent who will decide how the district will get there. Furthermore, principals lead the schools, and classroom teachers instruct the students. When everyone is clear about—and stays focused on—their primary responsibilities, the system works well. Boards, especially, need to respect how governance, as described by the BSAS, differs from administrative leadership.

The Problem of Micromanagement

The negative and harmful effects of micromanagement are often cited in the literature. Nicholas Caruso stated that “the greatest complaint by superintendents is that of the board micromanaging the administration.”⁴ Nancy Walser noted that “over and over . . . micromanagement—usually by one or two members of the board—was criticized by both board members and superintendents as their most common cause of frustration.”⁵ Micromanagement is a failure to respect the proper roles and



Failure to Govern (Continued)

responsibilities between the board and administration. Simply, when boards take on duties of the superintendent, the result is micromanagement.

Board Disarray

What happens to student achievement when board members disagree about what boards are supposed to do? In addition to identifying the characteristics of high-performing boards, the Montana study collected data on multiple members of the same board and analyzed the amount of reported variation.⁶ When board members were in agreement concerning the roles and responsibilities of the board, they governed districts with the highest student achievement scores. Conversely, boards who had members holding a wide variety of opinions concerning their roles and responsibilities governed districts with the lowest student achievement scores.

The term “disarray” was used to describe such a board. One of the most important tasks of the collective board is to work toward consensus about what a board does and how board members should conduct themselves. Effort should be made annually to provide for board training in this regard. Effective boards work to keep disarray to a minimum.

Avoid the ‘Killer B’s’

Paul Houston identified the “killer B’s” as being distractions for both collective and individual board members.⁷ Boards that allow urgent issues such as buses, buildings, books, budgets, ballgames, and bonds to capitalize time, energy, and attention fail to focus on the essential elements of the Board Standards described in the BSAS.

Houston advises boards to focus instead on the “critical C’s,” such as connections, communication, collaboration, community building, child advocacy, and curricular choices. The “C’s” capture the essential issues of boardsmanship.

Collective and Individual Errors

Effective boardsmanship can be examined in two ways: as a collective body and as individual board members. But it is only recently that the collective board, as well as individual board members, has been studied in relationship with student achievement.

Errors in the board room. David Lee and Daniel Eadens recently conducted a study of school boards across the country by examining video and audio recordings of 115 school board meetings.⁸ Their research established statistically significant relationships between certain boardsmanship behaviors and low student achievement scores. These boards conducted meetings that could be described as: (1) being less orderly, (2) spending little time on student achievement, (3) not listening respectfully

and attentively to the person speaking, (4) having members advance their own agendas, (5) having a poor working relationship with the leadership team, (6) having few members rely on the superintendent for advice/input, (7) having members, other than the chair, taking excessive meeting time advancing an agenda, and (8) being less focused on policy items. These characteristics described boards that governed districts with low student achievement scores.

Errors by individual board members. Being elected to a school board is one of the few occasions in our society where individual citizens with little or no background can quickly acquire power. Most school board members respect this responsibility and are content to sit back for a time and become familiar with typical proceedings. But there are exceptions. And it only takes one or two board members to cause problems for the district. There are several things individual board members should avoid. First, don’t be too forward too quickly—you are not automatically an expert on educational governance. Be careful not to micromanage the administration or faculty; take time to learn. Second, don’t be too detached. Sitting back, deferring to the administration and letting the district fend for itself is an abdication of your duty. Become appropriately engaged. Third, don’t make impossible or unrealistic demands on the district. Holding the administration accountable for increasing student achievement scores by 30 percent in one year is impossible, as is demanding your favorite sports team take the state championship. Collaborate with your leadership team—understand governance. Transformative improvement takes time and perseverance.

Conflicting Perceptions

Author Jamie Vollmer, businessman and former public school critic turned advocate and reformer, argues that school reform is usually not resisted by the school bureaucracy but by the community within which the school is embedded.⁹ He claims that teachers and other educational professionals not only know how to improve student achievement but are willing to implement the needed changes.

For example, from a staff perspective schools could improve by (a) modifying the curriculum, (b) improving student motivation and preparation, (c) rethinking assessment, and (d) altering or lengthening the school calendar, among others. Such ideas are typically embraced by schools but are rejected by the community because of misinformation, misunderstanding, overall expense, and interference with family vacations.

But from the public’s perspective, schools could improve by (a) cutting the budget, (b) getting back to “basics,” (c) eliminating non-essential administrators, and (d) firing incompetent teachers.



Failure to Govern (Continued)

When misperceptions about public schools and how they function are ignored by the board, community support declines. Engaging the community is essential.

More than Public Relations

Developing and sustaining an engaging relationship with the community is a commonly ignored but essential responsibility of the board. Too often the only time the district engages the community is when votes are sought for a levy or bond. The chances of having a successful election decrease if the community is regularly ignored.

Thriving districts that enjoy community support and pass bonds make a concerted effort to continually inform the community about their schools, consult with the community on issues of importance, involve them in the decision-making process, and collaborate through the creation of advisory committees and focus groups.

It's not difficult to connect with parents of students. But there is a large percentage of district taxpayers who no longer have children in the schools and who deserve attention from the board. Time during each monthly board meeting should be set aside to have a dialogue with a specific segment of your nonparent community to maintain contact with a wide variety of constituents. These are the voters you need. Maintaining an engaged community is a vital part of the board's job.

Lessons Learned

What we learned is that:

- District governance is the job of the school board and is defined by the Board Standards.
- Board disarray and micromanagement are common characteristics of low-performing districts.
- Certain behaviors, by either the collective board or

individual board members, can adversely affect student achievement.

- Ideas about how to improve student achievement often differ between educators and the public.
- Efforts to engage the community will improve understanding and generate support.

The fourth and final article in this series will discuss elements of boardsmanship present in districts with the highest student achievement.

1 Bennett, W., Finn, C., & Cribb, J. (1999); *The Educated Child: A Parent's Guide from Preschool through Eighth Grade*; New York; Touchstone.

2 Hill, P. (2003); "School boards: Focus on school performance, not money and patronage"; Progressive Policy Institute: 21st Century Schools Project; retrieved online.

3 Hess, F.M. & Meeks, O. (2010); "Governance in the Accountability Era: School Boards Circa 2010"; NSBA, Thomas Fordham Institute, and IA-SB, p. 6; retrieved online.

4 Caruso, N. (n.d.); "10 Mistakes Board Members Make"; Connecticut Association of Boards of Education; retrieved online.

5 Walser, N. (2009); *The Essential School Board Book: Better Governance in the Age of Accountability*; Cambridge, MA; Harvard Education Press.

6 Lorentzen, I. (2013); "The Relationship between School Board Governance Behaviors and Student Achievement Scores"; doctoral dissertation, University of Montana, 2013.

7 Houston, P. (2001); "Superintendents for the 21st Century: It's Not Just a Job, It's a Calling"; *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82, pp. 429-433.

8 Lee, D., & Eadens, D. (2014); "The Problem: Low-achieving Districts and Low-performing Boards"; *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership*; October 21, Vol. 9, No. 3.

9 Vollmer, J. (2010); *Schools Cannot Do It Alone: Building Public Support for America's Public Schools*; Fairfield, IA; Enlightened Press.

Ivan J. Lorentzen is an education management expert and psychology professor at Flathead Valley Community College. William P. McCaw is an educational leadership professor at the University of Montana.

Ask the Legal Expert

Q. The school board will hold its organizational meeting in January but both the chair and the vice-chair went off the board on December 31. Who opens the organizational meeting and chairs it until a new chair is chosen?

A. Anyone the board chooses. Some logical choices are a continuing board member who has previously served as chair or the longest-serving board member.

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

Annual Convention Tip #1

"For paperless organization while at the convention, download the VSBA convention app which will have the schedule of all events with time and place. Check your email each morning of the convention for a Convention Crier newsletter update. View the VSBA social media sites for photos from events that occur, and if you post information on your Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram page, use the hashtag that will be provided so that your posts can be shared!" - Karen S. Whetzel, Shenandoah County, VSBA Valley Region Chair



TOP TEN Reasons

November 20-22, 2019
Williamsburg, VA

to attend VSBA's Annual Convention

- 1 Learn!** Choose from over 40 breakout sessions that cover many hot topics in public education today.
- 2 Get Inspired.** Three great general session speakers will motivate and inspire you throughout the convention. Speakers include: Dr. Luvelle Brown, Dr. Tim Hodges, and Dr. Steve Constantino.
- 3 Celebrate Successes.** Throughout the convention, awards are given to various school boards for their work throughout the year. Come see if your division has won an award and celebrate successes in the Commonwealth.
- 4 This is your Association.** The VSBA Delegate Assembly allows you to make your voice heard, your vote count, and your Association strong.
- 5 Networking Opportunities.** Who better to learn from and share with other than Virginia school board members?
- 6 Student Art Showcase.** View the original artwork of the regional student art contest winners from 2019 from around Virginia.
- 7 Lunch & Learn Sessions.** Choose from many lunch and learn sessions to continue your education during the lunch break on Thursday.
- 8 Signs of Success.** Browse through posters of successful projects and programs that school divisions have highlighted for conference attendees to enjoy.
- 9 60+ Exhibitors.** The convention exhibitors are ready and excited to tell you about their products and services that can help your board.
- 10 Refresh and recharge.** Review your current practices, consider new ones, and get a fresh perspective.

For more information on the VSBA Annual Convention, please visit:
http://www.vsba.org/meetings_conferences/vsba_annual_convention/



VSBA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2019

November 20—22, 2019: Williamsburg Lodge



Dr. Luvelle Brown

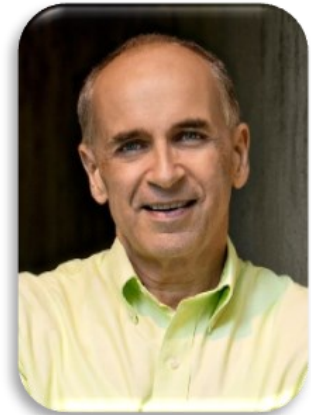
Dr. Luvelle Brown has served as Superintendent of the Ithaca City School District in Ithaca, New York since January 2011. Dr. Brown has been recognized by the National School Boards Association as a "20-to-Watch" and "Difference Maker", received the Center for Digital Education Top 30 Award, and received the eSchool News Tech-Savvy Superintendent Award.

Dr. Brown will be facilitating a panel discussion with some of Virginia's own students representing school divisions around the commonwealth.



Dr. Tim Hodges

Dr. Tim Hodges is a Senior Consultant for Gallup. Dr. Hodges consults with K-12 school districts and higher education institutions and leads research projects in strengths development, employee selection, employee engagement, and well-being. Hodges has delivered presentations and written journal articles and technical reports on many topics, including the CliftonStrengths assessment, strengths based development, Positive Psychology, and leadership development. He also serves as Executive Director of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Clifton Strengths Institute and as an Assistant Professor in the UNL College of Business.



Dr. Steve Constantino

Leader, teacher, speaker and best-selling author Dr. Steve Constantino has a long and distinguished career in leadership and bringing innovation to educational and business organizations and is internationally recognized for his work in family and organizational engagement. He began his career as a teacher and moved through the ranks to award-winning principal and school district superintendent in Virginia.

Early Bird Session

Wednesday, November 20 • 9:30 am – Noon

Paddling Upstream in a Public School Canoe

Dr. John Draper

The truth is that public schools are better than they have ever been— so why the national negativity surrounding them? Why do so many representatives from the State House to the White House, feel justified in criticizing public schools? Most of these representatives are caring, patriotic, well-meaning individuals who strangely, when assembled, become negative about public schools. What drives this misguided malady? In this presentation Dr. Draper pushes aside the branches of evil and leads you on a journey to the root of the problem. It's not low test scores or dwindling discipline or partisan politics or decaying families. You'll be surprised at the public myth that feeds negativity about public schools.

Public Schools are "locally led but nationally fed," says Dr. Draper. Our very design works to undermine support for public schools. Well-meaning school leaders often unwittingly exacerbate the problem. If we want to make it easier to paddle the public school canoe we must change the direction of the stream. This presentation offers seven, collaborative strategies to turn it around. They are simple to implement, cost almost nothing, and will pay huge dividends for public schools. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.

Additional registration is required.



VSBA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2019

November 20-22, 2019—Williamsburg Lodge

FOUNDATION WORKSHOP

November 19, 2019

The Virginia School Boards Association would like to invite you to a workshop for education foundation professionals, volunteers and those interested in starting an education foundation in your school division. The workshop, held in conjunction with the VSBA Annual Convention, will feature education foundation representatives from Virginia discussing how to work with a foundation board and partnering with the community. Additionally, attendees will discuss the important steps necessary in beginning a foundation. There will also be a chance to share best practices from your education foundation and pick up some great tools that you can use.

[Click here](#) for the workshop brochure.

[Click here](#) to register.

Don't Miss Out!

- Early Bird Session
- Foundations Workshop
- Receptions
- 3 General Sessions
- 40+ Breakout Sessions
- Delegate Assembly
- 70+ Exhibitors
- Daily Session Tracks
- Exhibitors Scholarship
- Student Board Representative Workshop
- Green Schools Challenge
- 16th Annual 5K Run/Walk
- Regional Meetings
- School Architecture Exhibition
- High School Video Contest
- Networking Opportunities

Annual Convention information is available online.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

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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.



ABM Education

ABM Education – helping K-12 schools excel. ABM provides multiple services that keep non-instructional costs down, control spending and protect priorities; ensure a healthy learning environment; improve facilities that support achievement.

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Email: corinne.hummel@abm.com
Website: <http://www.abm.com/k-12/>



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Website: <http://www.dlrgroup.com>

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

New COIA and FOIA Training Requirements

The 2019 General Assembly passed two bills (SB 1430 and SB 1431) that require all local elected officials, including elected school board members, to receive training on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Conflict of Interests Act (COIA).

The requirement for COIA training went into effect on July 1, 2019. Elected school board members who were in office on July 1, 2019 are required to receive training by December 31, 2019.

The requirement for FOIA training has a delayed effective date and will go into effect on July 1, 2020. Elected school board members who are in office on July 1, 2020 will be required to receive training by December 31, 2020.

The COIA training must be provided by the Ethics Council. It is available online at: <http://ethics.dls.virginia.gov/> The FOIA training must be provided by the FOIA Council or your board's attorney.

After the initial training, elected school board members are required to receive additional training at least once every two years.

As a reminder, these requirements are only applicable to **ELECTED** school boards ONLY.

The VSBA Annual Convention will feature a speaker from the Ethics Council which will fulfill the requirement for COIA training for all elected school board members. **THERE WILL BE LIMITED SEATING FOR THIS PRESENTATION.** The capacity will be 495.

Annual Convention Tip #2

"Don't forget to take advantage of "SCHED", the Online Guide to the VSBA Annual Convention. It is back by popular demand and contains all the information you need to help navigate your way around the entire convention." - R. Tyrone Foster, Bristol City, VSBA President



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

About one in eight women and one in 1,000 men develop breast cancer, but advances in awareness, prevention and treatment are raising survival rates. Be proactive: get a cancer screening this fall for peace of mind.

Learn more at www.bpatpa.com



UPCOMING CONFERENCES, EVENTS, WEBINARS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

November 20-22, 2019

VSBA Annual Convention

LOCATION: The Williamsburg Lodge, Williamsburg, VA
DETAIL: The VSBA Annual Convention is the largest and most anticipated VSBA meeting of the year. This event brings together over one thousand school board members, superintendents, and school division staff from across Virginia. Attend general sessions, choose from over 40 hot topic breakout sessions, have the opportunity to meet with businesses dedicated to serving schools, and much more.

December 11-12, 2019

VSBA Webinar Series- Insight for Budget Basics & Finance 101

LOCATION: Online
DETAIL: One of the most difficult jobs as a school board member is understanding the school budget process. To help educate school board members in Virginia, the VSBA will be offering a School Budget & Finance webinar series again this December. The series will consist of two webinars discussing various areas of school finance.

This is a two-part series presented by Leigh Burden, Assistant Superintendent of Budget and Finance from Fairfax County Public Schools.

January 13-14, 2020

VSBA Capital Conference

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott
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. The VSBA Capital Conference offers you an opportunity for your voice to be heard and continues VSBA's efforts for year-round advocacy.

January 29, 2020

Title IX- Best Practices in Training and Compliance

LOCATION: VSBA Offices, Charlottesville
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.

Convention Overview

Wednesday, November 20

8:30 - 5:30	Registration
9:30 - Noon	Early Bird Session (<i>pre-registration required</i>)
10:00 - 1:30	Student Board Representative Workshop
12:00 - 6:00	Exhibit Hall Open
2:00	General Session
4:30	Regional Meetings
5:00 - 6:00	President's Reception
8:15 - 11:00	Evening of Comedy & Music

Thursday, November 21

7:00	16th Annual VSBA 5K Walk/Run
8:00 - 9:15	Continental Breakfast
8:00 - 6:00	Exhibit Hall Open
8:45 - 10:00	General Session
10:15 - 12:30	Breakout Sessions
12:30 - 2:00	Boxed Lunches
12:45 - 1:45	Lunch & Learn Sessions
2:00 - 4:00	Delegate Assembly
2:00 - 4:30	VASS Workshop
2:30 - 4:45	Breakout Sessions
5:00 - 6:00	Reception

Friday, November 22

8:00 - 11:00	Breakfast & General Session
11:00	Adjourn

Annual Convention Tip #3

"Prior to going, coordinate with your fellow board members about which sessions you are attending so that you can maximize and share what you have learned with your colleagues when you return home. Take advantage of the conference to network with other board members from your region and across the commonwealth." - James Meyer, Spotsylvania County, Legislative Positions/Federal Relations Committee Chair

Thursday, November 21 is Spirit Day

Wear your school division colors or your Virginia Public Education T-shirt!





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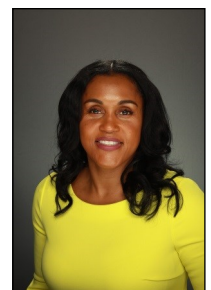
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MISSION STATEMENT

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.