



**VSBA President  
Rodney A. Jordan**

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

**January 13-14, 2020**  
Capital Conference

**January 14, 2020**  
Orientation for New  
Board Members and  
Superintendents

**January 14, 2020**  
Orientation for New  
Chairs and Vice-Chairs

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: LEADING THROUGH LEARNING

Thank you again for the honor of allowing me to serve as your VSBA President 2019 – 2020.

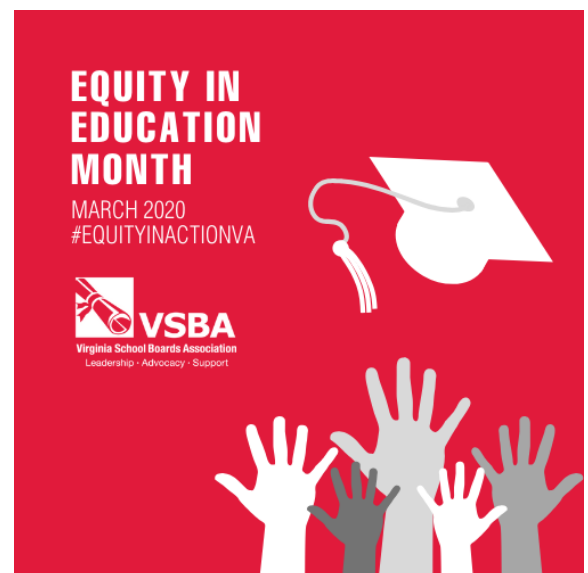
As school board members, we dedicate ourselves to providing high quality learning to hundreds of thousands of students who attend public schools throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. We are elected or appointed officials charged with governing one of the bedrock institutions for the success of the republic – public schools. Unlike teachers and superintendents and other education professionals who receive formal education and training prior to accepting their positions, far more than not school board members are thrust into our roles of leadership and governance with little formal education or preparation for our roles. Fortunately, there are learning resources available to us and I encourage all of us to lead through learning.

What greater example may we model for our students, our teachers, and the general public as to the importance of continuous learning than to commit ourselves individually and collectively (the board and superintendent together) to professional development. By our actions then, we uplift the value of public education and send the message learning is necessary for all of us to achieve success.

In my first article as VSBA President, I want to highlight learning opportunities for each of us to enhance our skills to serve our students and staff. Your VSBA provides professional development and training opportunities covering topics including student achievement, how to be a better board member, school finance, school law, policy development, and much more.

In 2020, let us strive to enhance our own learning, growth, and development. Research supports that informed school board members and governance teams yield better student achievement. Let us uplift the profession of education and student learning by leading through learning from the board room. How to start? Below are some opportunities available to you.

- [Capital Conference, January 13th & 14th](#)
- Hot Topic Conferences near you
  - [March](#)
  - [April](#)
- [Regional Spring Forums](#)
- [VSBA Webinars "On Demand"](#)
- VSBA Task Force Reports
  - [Workforce Readiness](#)
  - [Students & Schools in Challenging Environments](#)
- [VSBA Academy Awards](#)



"Excellence in the classroom begins with excellence in the board room!" Committing ourselves to our own learning and professional development, "We Can Make It... Together!"

R.J.



**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 staff have guidance when supporting/opposing legislation on various issues. VSBA is an association of school boards and represents the viewpoints of school 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 2020 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 13 & 14 in Richmond. Happy Holidays!

G.P.

## VSBA Delegate Assembly Update

The Delegate Assembly met on Thursday November 21, 2019 to consider 13 new or amended legislative proposals. Complete copies of all of the legislative proposals were provided to every school board member in the Delegate Assembly Handbook, which was distributed via email on September 30, 2019.

VSBA President R. Tyrone Foster reviewed the proposed legislative positions which covered topics ranging from Assessment Reform to Student Attendance Requirements. President Foster gave delegates the opportunity to approve all 13 proposals as a block. Proposals 3, 8, and 11 were removed from the block for debate by the Delegate Assembly. The remaining proposals were approved as a block by the delegates.

Proposal 3, Mandatory Reporting of Misdemeanors and Status Offenses, and Proposal 11, Attendance Requirements for Accreditation, were debated by delegates and approved by the assembly. Proposal 8, Scheduling of Elections, was debated and failed to gain approval from the delegates.

At the conclusion of debate on the legislative proposals, President Foster asked the assembly to approve two changes to the VSBA By-laws. The delegates approved each proposed change to the by-laws.

Outgoing members of the VSBA 2019 Board of Directors were recognized for their service by President Foster and presented with plaques from the association. At the conclusion of the Assembly, the 2020 VSBA Board of Directors were announced. The new Board was installed during the Friday morning general session of the convention.

### VSBA Legislative Priorities

On Friday, December 6 the VSBA Board of Directors approved the 2020 Legislative Priorities found [here](#). These priorities are where staff will spend extra efforts throughout the 2020 General Assembly Session.



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

Governor Ralph Northam proclaimed November as “VSBA Take Your Legislator to School Month” and school divisions across the Commonwealth welcomed returning and newly elected members of the Virginia General Assembly into their buildings. To promote a closer relationship between public education and members of the Virginia General Assembly, VSBA urged each school division to invite their elected officials to visit schools during the month. The participation by local school divisions in this event was outstanding and we were thrilled all the pictures of legislators interacting with students, school board members, and school administrators that were shared with us. We have included a selection of the many successful visits and meetings you had with your legislators.

### Lynchburg City Public Schools

Lynchburg City Public Schools welcomed Senator Mark J. Peake, Delegate Kathy J. Byron, Delegate-Elect Wendell Walker, and locally elected city officials to discuss the district’s 2020 legislative priorities. State and local elected officials were treated to breakfast prepared by the culinary class at E.C. Glass High School. Following the legislative priorities presentation, state elected officials visited students in the AP Government class where they answered questions from students about current issues in Virginia.



### Radford City Public Schools

Delegate Chris Hurst visited elementary and high school students in Radford City Public Schools where he interacted with students and discussed his role as a member of the Virginia General Assembly. Delegate Hurst also heard from school division leaders about their priorities and concerns for the 2020 legislative session.

### Essex County Public Schools

Essex County Public Schools hosted Delegate Keith Hodges who visited with school division leaders and students at Tappahannock Elementary School to discuss the upcoming legislative session and the needs of the school division. In addition, Delegate Hodges took questions from students and discussed the legislative process.



### Fairfax County Public Schools

Delegate David Bulova visited Fairfax County Public Schools and met with pre-K students at Daniels Run Elementary School and seniors at Fairfax High School. Delegate Bulova engaged in a discussion with students attending Fairfax High School on the importance of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program for academic success.

Thank you to all the school divisions that participated and shared stories and photos from Take Your Legislator to School Month 2019! These meetings provide context to legislators on the daily operation of our schools. Make sure to continue to engage with your legislators throughout the year and watch for legislative action alerts once the legislature convenes January 8, 2020.

J.T.





**Samantha Bosserman**  
VSBA Director of  
Communications and Board  
Development

## We Have a New Member, Now What?

Every time one member of the Governance Team changes, you are faced with the challenge of building a new team. Successful Governance Teams are deliberate with the onboarding process of the new member and involve the entire team and not just rely on the Superintendent and staff to orientate the new member. It is important to give your new member an opportunity to ask questions and feel comfortable in their new role. Set up a mentoring program within your division. Pair the new school board member with a more seasoned board member to help show them the ropes of board service. VSBA also has a mentor program available to new school board members that will pair them up with a seasoned member from across the state.

The board should work with the Superintendent and staff to set up school visits so the new member has a chance to see the buildings and meet key staff who will be affected by the policy decisions made by the board. Be patient and remember, you were new once too! There is always a learning curve in any new role, and some could argue that joining a school board is one of the most challenging facets of public service today.

The first document that a new school board member should receive is a copy of your school board norms and protocols. This document will give the new member an idea of how your board operates including the proper protocol should he/she want to add an item to the agenda, ask questions about an item, or what to do prior to visiting a school. It is always a good idea to review this document at least once a year and especially when you have a new member of the team. This should be a fluid, working document, so take some time to not only review the norms and protocols, but make edits if necessary.

If you are a new school board member, take some time to study past board agendas. Read through the minutes to get an idea of how the meeting is run, and if the resource is available, watch or listen to recordings of previous school board meetings. This will help give you an idea of the order of operations and the culture of your school board meetings.

Returning school board members- encourage your new team member to attend the VSBA Orientation sessions that are held each January and July. This conference is a great way to become acclimated with the statewide issues that will be faced as a school board member. This conference should not substitute for a local board orientation but should complement the team's efforts to onboard your new member. VSBA can also assist with team building through the Center for Board Development. Contact VSBA for additional information on setting up a personalized session to help build your new team. As always, VSBA is here for you throughout the onboarding process and beyond.

## 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 20, 2020. Letters and certificates will be mailed to recommended employers in February (VSBA School Board Appreciation Month).





## Division Spotlight: Stafford 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.*

### Stafford County Public School Students are Building Someone's Home

Submitted by Stafford County Public Schools

Students at all five Stafford County Public School high schools are taking vocational education to greater heights by building single-family homes in the county. The Bringing Occupational Opportunities to Students (BOOTS) program consists of drafting, masonry, electrical, and construction classes led by teachers at Stafford High School. The BOOTS program is the only program of its kind in the local area.

Together, nearly 2,000 students have completed the full construction cycle, building 25 homes from the initial drafting plan, through construction, and finally, to the sale of the home. Students are supervised and taught by four dedicated faculty members: Bobby Jett (Drafting), along with Dan Harding (Carpentry), Robby Phipps (Masonry), and Jack Huffstickler (Electricity) oversee the students in the classroom and at the construction site. Mr. Huffstickler also participated in the BOOTS program as an Electricity student.



"The success of the program depends on devoted teachers with a passion for developing the next generation of vocational technicians," said SCPS Superintendent Dr. Scott Kizner. "Stafford County Public Schools is fortunate to have these four gentleman who are willing to give so much of themselves to their students and the BOOTS program."

Under the supervision of the BOOTS leadership team, students build homes from the ground-up.

"BOOTS homes are built nearly 100% by students and teachers in our program," said Jett. "Carpentry students provide framing, cabinetry, and trim. The masonry students complete the brickwork. All of the lighting, wiring, and appliance connections are the work of the electrical students. We do not have HVAC or plumbing classes, so those are the two major aspects of the homes our students do not complete."

The goal of BOOTS is to prepare students for careers in construction trades. Founders Wendell Latham, Jimmy Carver, and Charlie Loving, wanted a real life building program that allowed students to experience actual construction activity on a real job site. Together with the school board in 1988, the Stafford County Vocational Education Foundation oversaw the new construction education program.

Seed money allowed for the purchase of lots in the Hickory Ridge subdivision in Stafford County. Drafting students in 1990 manually drafted plans for the first BOOTS home, located on Cherry Laurel Drive.

"The first house was a simple ranch house with a one car garage," said Jett. "At the time, we drew the house plans manually; today we use the latest 3D modeling software. That's how far the program has come."

A typical contracted home can be completed in three-to-six months according to Jett. BOOTS students travel to the construction site (weather permitting) up to five times per week during their regularly scheduled class time. There, students spend one to three hours working on the home.



(continued on next page)





## Division Spotlight: Stafford County Public Schools (continued)

"It takes a full two years to complete one of our homes," explained Jett. "The drafting students begin drawing plans and obtaining permits while the previous year's design is under construction."

The Stafford County Vocational Education Foundation and its Board of Directors oversee the BOOTS program. Among board members are a real estate agent, two builders, and a former building maintenance engineer and electricity teacher, who help to find affordable construction lots for the program within 20 minutes of Stafford High School.

"Seed money was provided with the understanding that the BOOTS program would become self-sufficient," said Jett. "And that has been the case for the last 20 years."

Since 1991, students have completed 25 BOOTS homes. Proceeds from the sale of each home provide further funding for the BOOTS program.



"Most of the money generated through selling a house goes back into a building lot," explained Jett. "The proceeds also provide scholarships for the students. This can be a financial scholarship, but we also provide students with a set of tools that they can take into the working world. We really want to set our students up for success."

"This program really allows for students with an interest in vocations to succeed in the future," said Kizner. "We are providing an excellent opportunity for them."

Masonry, carpentry, and electrical students are hard at work on home 26, with the hopes of selling the house in April. Located on Deacon Road, the home is a one-story bungalow-style ranch with a brick front, 3 bedrooms, 2 ½ baths, 2-car garage, an open floor plan and a full basement, according to Karen Zink, the real estate agent and Board of Directors member responsible for selling the BOOTS homes.

"I am so proud of the quality and craftsmanship of these students," said Zink.

Drafting students are working on plans for BOOTS house 27, however, there is concern.

"After this year, we have one more lot," said Jett. "Finding affordable lots within 20 minutes travel time of Stafford High School is not easy in a growing county."

## Ask the Legal Expert

- Q. How long may a person serve in the position of long-term substitute teacher?
- A. 90 days. Any exception must be approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction on a case by case basis. Va. Code § 22.1-302.

See previous "Ask the Legal Experts" online at [http://www.vsba.org/services/legal\\_services/ask\\_the\\_experts/](http://www.vsba.org/services/legal_services/ask_the_experts/)

In the 2019 VSBA Member Opinion Survey 98.95% of respondents listed that they Strongly Agree or Agree that VSBA is effective at keeping your board up-to-date and informed on advocacy issues.

# 98.95%



## 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/](http://www.vsba.org/services/vsba_school_board_news_podcast/)



## Staying the Course

### Conclusion of Boardmanship Series Underscores Successful School Board Behaviors

by Ivan J. Lorentzen and William P. McCaw

*This is the fourth and final of a 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.*

There is a vast difference in student achievement scores within and among school districts across America. The reasons for these differences are many—and while some factors are beyond the control of the school district, many others are under their control. Teachers, principals, and administrators have long been implementing effective research-based strategies known to help students succeed.

Recent research has provided school boards with governance strategies associated with high student achievement. School boards should now consider changing the way they govern by implementing the prioritized actions detailed by the Board Standards (see the second article in the series, entitled “The Science of Student Achievement,” on page 12 of the May 2017 edition for more details). Boards should also consider addressing the nature of internal board relations (called “closure”) and external relations through interactions with the community (called “brokerage”). These actions are consistent with effective board governance and predictive of higher student achievement scores.

#### Beyond Opinion

Researchers examining student achievement have focused their attention on students, teachers, classrooms, administrators, and school boards. These examinations provide opportunities to learn what happens to student achievement when various conditions exist. Whether a school is urban or rural, large or small, affluent or poor, ethnically homogenous or diverse, there are certain board characteristics common to school districts that report high student achievement. Understanding these characteristics and how they relate to student achievement helps form the building blocks of effective boardmanship.

Research has shown that certain board behaviors, described by the Board Standards, are statistically related to high student achievement (Lorentzen, 2013). The Board Standards inform boards that their job is to look “up and out” while letting the administration deal with issues that are “down and in.” Effective school boards spend time on issues that have districtwide implications, such as ensuring accountability, setting high student expectations, governing responsibly, engaging the community, and creating the conditions for student and staff success. Looking “down and in” is delegated to the superintendent, who deals with things such as teaching, sports, buses and transportation, student grievances, and personnel.

#### Reducing Board Disarray

A school board that harbors wide disagreement about its proper roles and responsibilities is a board in disarray. When individual board members come to the board armed primarily with lay wisdom to guide their actions and decisions, it is little wonder opinions differ widely. Effective boardmanship is not intuitive. There are appropriate and inappropriate ways to behave as an individual board member and as a collective board interested in improving student achievement.

One of the most important internal discussions a board can have involves coming to agreement about the board’s appropriate roles and responsibilities, as well as establishing expectations for the behavior of individual board members. Boards with low internal relations lack trust, don’t have a shared vision, display a lack of professionalism, and run the risk of telegraphing to the community that the district is equally unprincipled. To protect against these negative issues, some districts adopt a code of ethics, or code of conduct. Others develop a district plan, to which the Board Standards refer many times.

#### The District Plan

Many districts have strategic or long-term plans. While potentially beneficial, such plans too often have little practical utility because they are routinely shelved after being written. The district plan, on the other hand, is broader and contains two specific parts. The first part is the traditional strategic plan, which makes reference to multiple issues affecting the district. Typically, strategic plans don’t refer to the board but rather articulate long- and short-term goals that others within the district are held responsible to accomplish.

The second part is the board plan, which is written by the board to help guide its own actions. The board plan makes assurances to the public and district employees about how the board will govern the district. This plan should be consulted when making decisions, setting policy, allocating funds, creating initiatives, setting goals, and monitoring progress. It sets expectations that all students can learn, holds the administration accountable for making progress, and vows financial support toward this end. It is also a living document that sets district standards and expectations of how students, teachers, administrators, and the board itself are expected to function.



## Staying the Course (Continued)

The board plan can be published online or in the local newspaper as an open letter to the community. Boards may choose to read pertinent portions of this plan at the beginning of each meeting or prior to voting as a reminder of what commitments have been made.

When properly developed and utilized, the two parts of the district plan become the rudder that steers the district forward each month while simultaneously reminding the board to delegate distracting issues to the superintendent.

### Maintaining Focus

While most districts have committees focused on finance, curriculum, facilities, and personnel, it is recommended by several organizations that school boards add a committee on governance, whose task includes making sure the board continues to function according to the district plan. This committee is responsible for locating the pertinent policy or statement in the district plan that justifies an agenda item as a board issue. If such a reference cannot be found, the issue is delegated to the superintendent. In addition, it is recommended that the agendas for monthly board meetings include items of districtwide importance, such as community engagement, student achievement, and board development.

The use of a preplanned annual calendar also stipulates, in a proactive manner, what district reports, trainings, and community group interactions are planned. Using such a calendar can keep the board focused on issues important to district governance, effective boardsmanship, and student achievement.

### Only the Board

The school board has two overarching responsibilities only it can perform: engaging the community and collaborating with the superintendent (see Figure 1). There are some things only the board can do. There are some things only the community can do. And there are some things only the superintendent can do. Understanding these clear distinctions can help the board function more efficiently and effectively.

Figure 1

### Effective Boardsmanship Roles and Responsibilities



For example, only the community can send its children to the school, vote in elections, volunteer at the school, and offer candidates for the school board. Only the board can adopt the budget, construct and maintain facilities, make levy and bond requests, hire and evaluate the superintendent, engage the local community on matters of official district governance, and evaluate its own performance. Only the superintendent can be the district CEO; make recommendations regarding personnel, policy, and budget; provide the board with requested information; oversee the educational program; carry out policy; and make progress toward student achievement goals.

It is also important to recognize that there is an appropriate amount of overlap in these roles, where community and board, as well as board and superintendent, work together. Districts that respect and enact these roles and responsibilities govern districts with the highest student achievement scores.

Elitist boards ignore the community. Micromanaging boards steal responsibilities from the superintendent. Boards showing deference to the superintendent abdicate their responsibilities. These undesirable board behaviors, evidence of inappropriate overlap, can eventually result in frequent superintendent turnover, which by itself is related to lower achievement scores (Alsbury, 2008). Effective boards recognize their appropriate overlap of roles and responsibilities with both the community and superintendent and also understand and respect the autonomy within each role.

### Districtwide Improvement Efforts

There are two ways student achievement is often addressed: one, by focusing narrowly at the level of the classroom or school; and another, by focusing more broadly at the level of the district (see Figure 2). When districts rely solely on teachers or principals to address achievement, the effort is vulnerable to personnel changes or uninformed decision-making by the administration or board. On the other hand, when efforts to improve student achievement are addressed districtwide, there is a greater chance of transforming the entire district.

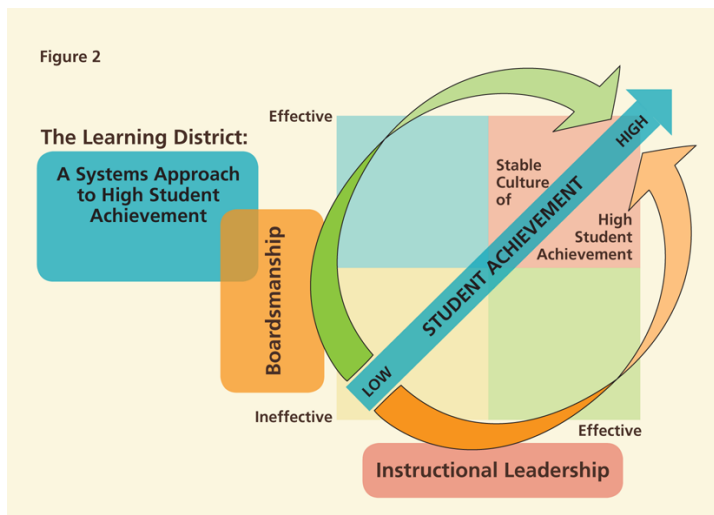
This approach is broader and more stable but may be more difficult to launch because it necessarily requires both effective boardsmanship (involving the governance team of board and superintendent) and instructional leadership (involving the instructional team of superintendent, principal, and teacher). The superintendent, of course, is an integral part of both the governance and instructional teams. Districtwide improvements in student achievement can be transformational, and therefore lasting, when boardsmanship and instructional leadership work simultaneously to address achievement in their respective ways. The transformation is not necessarily easy or quick, but districts





## Staying the Course (Continued)

have successfully accomplished it. It begins when the district decides the status quo is no longer acceptable.



### Becoming a Learning District

The beneficial effects of professional development are hard to overstate. While all states have education, certification, and professional development requirements for teachers and administrators, comparable requirements for school board members vary from state to state.

Once again, boardsmanship is not intuitive. Becoming a master teacher and accomplished administrator is the result of education, certification, and experience. Boardsmanship can be approached similarly. The National School Boards Association and TASB (Texas Association of School Boards) encourage all board members to participate in ongoing board training by attending conferences, participating in workshops, and holding study sessions to become better informed about governance issues facing the district.

Participating in professional development should not be optional for anyone involved in public education, including the board. And when everyone in the district takes advantage of ongoing training opportunities, works together, and learns together, then the district is becoming a Learning District. School districts are complex, organic organisms that succeed only when all parts of the system gain new information and understandings and begin to learn and improve together.

### What We've Learned

- There is a developing science to effective boardsmanship. You no longer have to guess.
- The actions of school boards affect student achievement.
- The Board Standards describe elements of boardsmanship statistically related to high student achievement.

- The board is responsible for districtwide student achievement scores.
- The board's two most important relationships are with the community and the superintendent.
- A board in disarray cannot govern a district toward high student achievement.
- Micromanagement harms student achievement scores, as does deference to administration.
- Engaging the community is an often overlooked but vital responsibility of the board.
- A district plan, containing the strategic and board plans, helps inform the district's actions.
- When everyone in the system learns together, a Learning District can emerge.

### Final Thoughts

School board members are elected community members who volunteer to help govern the local school. Without guidance, board members have only intuition and personal experience to guide their decisions—which result in significant diversity between and among boards along many dimensions.

This series of four articles has advocated replacing board behaviors relying on intuition and personal opinion with behavior supported with research and recognized as best practice. These articles also advocate following the lead of boards who govern districts with the highest student achievement scores. These boards are doing something right, and they have things to teach us all. We do not claim to describe the one and only way to raise student achievement, but lessons can be learned from the most successful districts.

At this point in time, we are convinced that (a) implementing Board Standards, (b) enhancing internal board relations, and (c) improving external community relations are the best ways for a board to conduct business in order to improve student achievement districtwide. What we've suggested is a forecasting model based on the most current research. All districts should become Learning Districts. We hope the suggestions described here were helpful and trust that these ideas will be further refined as more research is conducted and important discussions continue.

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.



# 2019 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

## 2019 VSBA High School Student Video Contest Winners Announced

The VSBA's eighth annual student video contest challenged high school students across Virginia to create a 30-second video around the theme of "Virginia is for Learners." The first, second and third place winners, selected out of 31 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.

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: "Virginia is for Learners"** <https://vimeo.com/364183263>

Arlington Career Center (Arlington County Public Schools) – Peter Collins, Khulan Erdenedalai, Emilio Tognelli

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: "Virginia is for Learners"** <https://youtu.be/jgji83lpbtA>

Goochland High School (Goochland County Public Schools) – Caden Peck

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place: "NOW WE LEARN"** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qStqVHkmgAU>

Hanover High School (Hanover County Public Schools) – William Gordon, Paige Lake, Jonathan Ruiz, Jamie Hughes, Ruthie Weeks, and Paris Dailey

## Honorable Mentions:

Newport News City Public Schools, Newport News Public Schools Telecommunications Center

"Virginia is for Learners" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0vBSqWaiLo>

Isle of Wight County Public Schools, Smithfield High School

"Virginia is for Learners" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3RqV8x0nZU&feature=youtu.be>

Stafford County Public Schools, North Stafford High School

"The Road Less Traveled" [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T6LkcdXa77rPJrLuNb2XkkogcEGmLKQ/view?usp=drive\\_open](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T6LkcdXa77rPJrLuNb2XkkogcEGmLKQ/view?usp=drive_open)

Thank you to Haney Phinyowattanachip PLCC for sponsoring this year's contest.

## 2019 VSBA Green Schools Challenge Winners Announced

Three school divisions received top awards in the 2019 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 eleventh year the awards were given out, and the challenge was sponsored by Moseley Architects and ABM Building & Energy Solutions.

King & Queen County Public Schools  
(Student Population Under 5,000)

Isle of Wight County Public Schools  
(Student Population 5,001 – 10,000)

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







# 2019 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



## 4 Architectural Projects Earn State Awards; Quinn Evans Wins “People’s Choice Award”

Four architectural firms were recognized in the 2019 VSBA *Exhibition of School Architecture*. Winning projects were selected from 11 entries submitted by 6 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: Moseley Architects

PROJECT: Powhatan Middle School

DIVISION: Powhatan County Public Schools

AWARD: Gold Design Award

FIRM: Quinn Evans

PROJECT: Courtland High School

DIVISION: Spotsylvania County Public Schools

AWARD: Silver Design Award

FIRM: RRMM Architects

PROJECT: Smithfield and Windsor High Schools CTE Renovations

DIVISION: Isle of Wight County Public Schools

AWARD: Silver Design Award

FIRM: Stantec Architecture

PROJECT: Academies of Loudoun

DIVISION: Loudoun County Public Schools

In addition, Quinn Evans’ work on Courtland High School in Spotsylvania County won the firm the “People’s Choice Award.”

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







# 2019 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

## Caroline County School Board Receives VSBA Board of Distinction Recognition



VSBA Past President Tyrone Foster presented the Caroline 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. The award was sponsored by Secure Futures Solar.

## Julie Bennington and Bill Brooks Honored as Regional School Board Members of the Year.



VSBA Past President Tyrone Foster presented Julie Bennington (Bedford County School Board) and Bill Brooks (Washington County School Board) the VSBA Regional School Board Member of the Year award in recognition of their boardsmanship qualities and active involvement in promoting student achievement. This award, in its 18th year, can be given to one school board member per VSBA region each year.



## Richmond County School Board Receives VSBA School Board of the Year Recognition



VSBA Past President Tyrone Foster presented the Richmond County School Board with the VSBA School Board of the Year award. This title is given to one outstanding school board each year to recognize its efforts and accomplishments. The judges selected the Richmond County School Board, whose strong application reflected its desire for continuous improvement which permeates the fabric of the school division and is infectious to the surrounding community.

## Goochland County School Board Member Beth Hardy Receives VSBA Advocate for Education Award



VSBA Past President Tyrone Foster presented Goochland County School Board Member Beth Hardy 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 fifth year this award has been presented. The award was sponsored by ABM.

## Washington County and Bristol City Board Members Receive VSBA Quarter Century Award in Recognition of 25 Years of School Board Service

Elizabeth Lowe (Washington County School Board) and Randall White (Bristol City School Board) were each presented with the VSBA Quarter Century Award in recognition of 25 years of consecutive service on their school boards.



# 2019 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

## Niharika Singhvi, Falls Church School Board Student Representative Awarded VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship

Applications for the competitive VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship were made available to spring 2020 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?

As an SCA officer, I've often had people come up to me and talk about what they don't like or what they want to see changed in the school. Unfortunately, as an SCA member, our power is severely limited, but I knew I had to find some way to address those students' concerns and affect change in aspects about the school that I think could be improved, such as raising environmental awareness and implementing more student opinion in school decisions. Being the School Board student representative has given me the perfect opportunity to accomplish what I wasn't able to do through SCA and help bring about direct and positive change in the student community.



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

So far, my most memorable experience has been the board's annual retreat, since it gave me a very diverse and complete experience of being a part of the School Board. At the retreat, we had team building opportunities, a presentation, and discussions and seeing everyone in action allowed me to see the scope of the work done by the board and how it functions, especially since it was one of my first experiences with the board. This also allowed me to get to know the board members better, and merely being able to learn from everyone was an invaluable experience.

### What does receiving the VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship mean to you?

Being a School Board Representative has been so rewarding and meaningful for me. I've learned so much from the experience and it's an incredible opportunity to be able to represent students and use my voice to improve my city's schools. This is why it's a great honor to receive the VSBA Scholarship. This scholarship will help me to pursue my college education, which I will further use to work towards my goals and dreams. The financial support that this scholarship will give me will go a long way, and I'll always value not only the scholarship itself, but also VSBA for providing me with this amazing opportunity and my experience as a School Board Representative.

*Thank you to the sponsors of the VSBA Exhibitors Scholarship: Ameresco and Mountain Valley Transportation.*

## Thank you to the VSBA Annual Convention Event-Level Sponsors

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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.**



### Honeywell International

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### WHRO

Dedicated to enhancing the lives of the citizens in the communities it serves by responding to their need to be engaged, educated, entertained.

Lindsey Horner

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**Visit [http://www.vsba.org/resources/affiliates/affiliate\\_member\\_program/](http://www.vsba.org/resources/affiliates/affiliate_member_program/) for a complete list of VSBA's Affiliate Members.**



## Stay Healthy This Holiday!

Life is hectic this time of year. It can be difficult to stay on track with your exercise habits. But, with BPA's BestLife app and member portal, tracking your fitness goals and staying on the 'nice' and healthy list this holiday season has never been easier!

Learn more at [www.bpatpa.com](http://www.bpatpa.com)

## Miss a webinar?

**No problem!**

VSBA webinars are available "on demand" to fit your schedule.

For details, contact Jessica Blythe assistant director of membership services and communications at [jessica@vsba.org](mailto:jessica@vsba.org) or visit :

[http://www.vsba.org/meetings\\_conferences/webinars\\_on\\_demand/](http://www.vsba.org/meetings_conferences/webinars_on_demand/)

## Current VSBA Superintendent Searches

Surry County Public Schools

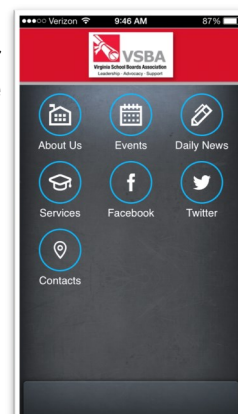
For additional information on the VSBA Superintendent Search Services, please visit: [http://www.vsba.org/services/superintendent\\_search\\_assistance/](http://www.vsba.org/services/superintendent_search_assistance/)

## VSBA App—Your On-the-Go Resource

The VSBA App is a great way to have quick access to VSBA information at your fingertips. The app is available for iPhone (in the App Store) by doing a search for "**VSBA**".

Highlights Include:

- A direct feed of the Virginia Daily Education News, which will automatically update every day.
- A calendar of events for upcoming VSBA meetings and conferences.
- Direct connections to the VSBA Twitter feed and Facebook page (*you don't need to be Facebook or Twitter users to use this function*).
- Easy access to VSBA staff contact information.
- Information on VSBA services.







## UPCOMING CONFERENCES, EVENTS, WEBINARS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

### 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.

Sponsored by:



### January 14, 2020

#### [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, which is a "must" for all new board members and superintendents!

Sponsored by:



### January 14, 2020

#### [VSBA Orientation for New Chairs & Vice-Chairs](#)

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott, Richmond

DETAIL: Every board member has a responsibility to make the school board effective, but the chair carries the heaviest responsibility since s/he was selected by peers to be their leader. Certain skills and actions simply are required if the chair is to get the job done properly. This workshop was developed to help the board chair and vice-chair (current or prospective) meet the requirements of the position and provide tools to assist you to build a better school board. Attendees are introduced to parliamentary procedure and legal requirements of board meetings. Participants will also engage in activities that develop critical skills to deal more effectively with the media and the public.

Don't miss this popular event, which is a "must" for all new or prospective chairs and vice-chairs.

Sponsored by:



### January 16, 2020

#### [Free Webinar: Designing for School Safety and Security](#)

LOCATION: Online

DETAIL: The safety of those who occupy our school buildings is paramount, but in securing our facilities how do we err on the side of caution without taking it to the extreme? School planning and design experts will share lessons learned and best practices related to everything from hardening of schools to fostering the social and emotional well-being of occupants. Join us for this hot-topic webinar to learn how to accomplish your goal of keeping students safe while still maximizing their potential for learning and development.

### January 21, 2020

#### [Free Webinar: Everything You Wanted to Know about Opening a K-12 Office of the Ombudsman](#)

LOCATION: Online

DETAIL: This presentation will highlight the steps taken to clarify the desired outcomes for the establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman, discussions to define the role and requirements of the office, allocation of resources, establishment of office protocols, community response to the office, and a summary of the data and trends from our first year. Responses in the first year of the office were so strong, that the school board added an Assistant Ombudsman for Special Education and expanded the office's duties to include support for all employees.

### 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.

For more information, and to view the 2020 yearly conference schedules please visit:

[http://www.vsba.org/meetings\\_conferences/schedule\\_of\\_meetings\\_conferences/](http://www.vsba.org/meetings_conferences/schedule_of_meetings_conferences/)



## 2019 -2020 VSBA Board of Directors



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Norfolk City



**PRESIDENT-ELECT**  
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FEDERAL RELATIONS  
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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.