

# VSBA Special Edition Newsletter

December 2012

## The VSBA Brand

# The VSBA Is Its Membership

Since 1906, the Virginia School Boards Association has strived to promote the advancement of education through services to local school boards. Representing all of the local school divisions in Virginia, the membership of the VSBA consists of 134 school boards that are responsible for 100% of the students who attend Virginia's public schools. While the previous logo and tagline served us well for the past 30 years, the association needed a new logo and tagline that accurately represented the "VSBA brand" now and in the future.

### Defining the VSBA

Through the use of focus groups, surveys, staff meetings, and executive meetings, we were able to learn from our stakeholders what the VSBA means to them. What became readily apparent is that VSBA stakeholders overwhelmingly feel that the VSBA is the leader in public education in Virginia. It is known that if any group has accurate and timely information or can help with an education-related issue, the VSBA is the go-to group. Beyond members, other educational associations, leaders, and organizations often rely on the VSBA for information and assistance, and from an advocacy perspective the VSBA is known as one of the most influential lobbying groups in the Commonwealth. This level of respect and recognition extends nationally, where other states often look to Virginia for ideas on how an efficient and effective school boards association should function.

However, it was also clear that the idea of national recognition and serving as a resource to other organizations is secondary to the VSBA's primary mission of promoting excellence in public education through advocacy, training, and services for, and with, its members. Members are the number one priority for the VSBA, and a common theme is the desire for members to feel a sense of ownership of the VSBA...that it is their association...that they acknowledge the value of membership and become active participants in their association. This concept became the basis for the development of our new tagline.

### Tagline Premise

*The VSBA doesn't just represent and support the members, it is the members...it's their association...it's an association of them.*

With this in mind, the tagline must represent the many leadership roles the VSBA takes as the voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards that promotes excellence in public education through advocacy, training, and services. However, the tagline must also represent the individual school boards themselves. It's not just what the VSBA as an organization does for the boards; it's also about what the individual school boards do locally as the leaders of public education in their communities.

### Our New Tagline

With this premise as our guide, the VSBA's new tagline became clear:

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

Three words, each equally representing the work of the VSBA as an organization, as well as the work each school board, and each school board member, does in their local communities. We, both the association and individual members, are the leaders, advocates, and supporters of public education in Virginia.

### Our New Logo

The VSBA's new logo is a visual representation of the VSBA brand. Beyond clearly stating who we are, it is visually striking and very recognizable. As Joan Wodiska, VSBA past president, observed when the new logo was presented to the VSBA Board of Directors, "The diploma represents our ultimate goal of graduation and success for all of our students."

When our new logo and tagline are combined, the VSBA brand is very clearly defined. It is something to be proud of. Few organizations and its members can unequivocally state that they are the LEADERS, ADVOCATES, and SUPPORTERS of something as important as the education of our youth. We can.



# VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association

Leadership • Advocacy • Support

### Superintendent Search Assistance

Among the most important decisions that a school board makes is the selection of the superintendent. VSBA Superintendent Search Assistance provides thorough and professional services throughout the search process, all at a cost that is considerably less than that of private consultants. The goal is to promote a match that makes for an effective policy-making team. From advertising and screening to consultation, the VSBA helps to ensure that this vitally important decision is a sound one. The VSBA assisted with 12 superintendent searches in 2011-2012 alone.

**Legal Services** VSBA employs two full-time attorneys for regular consultation and legal research. The staff attorneys are available to school board members and superintendents for limited consultation. The VSBA Council of School Attorneys provides a network for school attorneys as well as special publications and seminars concerning educational law; this organization is affiliated with the National School Boards Association Council of School Attorneys. In addition, the VSBA Legal Assistance Fund offers assistance

The VSBA helps me as a school board member by providing a variety of products and services to make my job easier.

Roy Boyles  
VSBA President  
School Board Member  
Warren County Public Schools

in legal cases that have a statewide impact on school board authority. Participating members are eligible to receive financial aid for cases at the appellate level, amicus curiae (friend of the court) briefs, or a combination of these services.

**Legislative Services** VSBA's governmental relations program ensures that the interest of school divisions is represented in formulating state and federal education policy. The VSBA represents the concerns of school divisions during the General Assembly, at meetings of the State Board of Education, and before other state agencies. Concerns on the national level are monitored by the VSBA staff and members of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) Federal Relations Network. VSBA communicates regularly with members of the

General Assembly and Congress on high priority issues such as school financing, standards of quality, etc. Efforts include presenting formal testimony at public hearings, providing comments on specific bills before House and Senate committees, and routinely meeting with individual legislators regarding the needs of local school divisions. The VSBA information network features The Legislative Blog, and the Legislative E-Alerts, an up-to-date electronic update on legislative and congressional activities and analyses of bills that is published during the General Assembly session.

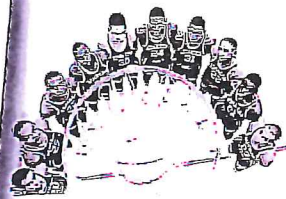
**PR & Communications Services** In response to member need, the VSBA has partnered with Title20 Consulting, LLC to offer communications and public relations services as a fee-for-service membership benefit. Considering the vast number of internal and external publics of a division, as well as the increased scrutiny and criticism of public education, implementing effective communications strategies is no easy task. While some school divisions are fortunate to have an in-house communications expert, most divisions do not; funding the salary



1948



1953



1960



1970

### 1952

The School Trustees Association of Virginia (STAV) changes its name to the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA).

### 1953

VSBA establishes newsletter

### 1955

The VSBA employs its first part-time Executive Director (then called Executive Secretary); the VSBA offices moved from the VEA offices in Richmond to Peabody Hall at the University of Virginia School of Education.

### 1956

The VSBA employs its second part-time Executive Director (then called Executive Secretary)

### 1957

The VSBA affiliates with the National School Boards Association (NSBA)

### 1958

The VSBA employs its third part-time Executive Director (then called Executive Secretary)

### 1960s

VSBA begins offering Superintendent Search Services

### 1973

VSBA offices move to Ruffner Hall at the University of Virginia School of Education.

### 1983

The VSBA employs its fourth part-time Executive Director (then called Executive Secretary). The title of the VSBA Executive Secretary is changed to Executive Director.