



**VSBA President
Kerri Wilson
(Harrisonburg City School Board)**

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL 28
Hot Topic Conference

MAY 20
Webinar

JUNE 6
School Law Conference

JULY 21
New Chairmen/Board Member/
Superintendent Orientation

JULY 22
Conference on Education

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy spring, everyone! February was recognized by Governor McAuliffe as School Board Appreciation Month throughout the Commonwealth. As a follow up to that, I would like to personally thank all of you for the commitment you have made to your community, to your local schools, to the children in your schools, and to public education as a whole. As a society, a quality education for every child is a foundational and fundamental component of our past, present, and future successes. In Virginia, public education is an evolving force; changing and improving to meet the needs of every child, every day. Across the nation, Virginia is highly revered as a leader in public education.

This year's theme--Virginia, we are ONE!--was born from my desire to help one another, mostly in terms of the challenges we face as school divisions; the concept being we are stronger together than we are as individuals. As I contemplated the passing of February, School Board Appreciation Month, I reflected on how that concept can be applicable at the board level, as well.

Becoming a school board member is a lot like jumping onto a moving train. I appreciate the fact that there are individuals (yourselves) out there that are willing to take that proverbial leap to even get on the train, and appreciation abounds for those that are willing to stay on as the train barrels on down the tracks. It is because of you--your passion for education, your compassion for every child, your desire to ensure a high quality education in your locality, and your willingness to advocate for public education--that this train continues to move forward. You are the reason why every child in every locality will be held to higher standards and, as a result, will have endless opportunities to achieve, succeed and excel in life regardless of their background, zip code, or home life.

In public education, we meet every child where they are and take them as far as they want to go. I love this summation because it's true! The institute of public education accepts every child that shows up, regardless of where they are academically, socially and/or emotionally, and makes the commitment to work with them to ensure they graduate from high school with the

skills and tools necessary to be productive and contributing members of society. Whether they pursue a post-secondary education, attend a trade school, or go directly into the workforce, the foundation of a high quality education is paramount to their success.

That is a huge responsibility and it all starts with you, as leaders, advocates, and supporters of public education. You, as board members working together, set the tone for your division to follow. You establish the attitude, the inspiration, and the motivation for student achievement throughout your division. You institute the standards and expectations your division aspires to meet. As a school board member, the strength of your effectiveness lies within your ability to work as a team with your fellow board members. As an individual board member, you cannot effect change. Yet, as a board, you can move mountains. Hence, we are stronger together than we are as individuals.

Meeting With Governor McAuliffe to Discuss Educational Issues and Priorities

On March 27, school board members, including members of the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Board of Directors, VSBA Task Force on Virtual Learning, and VSBA Task Force on Schools in Challenging Environments met with Governor Terry McAuliffe, Secretary of Education Anne Holton, Secretary of Health Bill Hazel, and members of the governor's staff in Richmond to discuss various educational issues and priorities. Topics included:

- An update from the VSBA Task Force on Virtual Learning, which included a recommendation to further explore the availability of broadband access throughout the Commonwealth to enhance student access to virtual learning opportunities.
- An update from the VSBA Task Force on Schools in Challenging Environments, including an overview on the creation of domain-specific reports that outline

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Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By the time you read this article, the Virginia General Assembly will have completed the 2014 Session. By this time, you should also have received a letter from Bob Hundley, chairman of the VSBA Legislative Positions Committee, requesting proposed resolutions or standing policies. The success which VSBA realizes in the legislature are due to the participation of our membership throughout the year. It begins now, in the spring and summer, with the collection of legislative resolutions drawn from member divisions.

The cycle will begin with a call for 2014 resolutions, standing policies and changes to the organizational bylaws. This is a process which helps the VSBA staff represent board members throughout the state in an effective manner. Through this process, when school board members talk to legislators, they are able to talk with the voice of all school board members behind them.

Each proposal is received and reviewed by the VSBA Legislative Positions Committee, which is composed of school board members from throughout the state. The committee sends the approved proposals to the VSBA Delegate Assembly, which uses a “one division, one vote” format to finalize VSBA’s legislative agenda.

Setting our legislative agenda is a thoughtful, deliberate process. It is an inclusive process which creates a strong legislative force for the needs of Virginia’s school children. This action is the beginning of the road to the VSBA Delegate Assembly, which will be at the Williamsburg Doubletree on Thursday, November, 20, 2014.

Resolutions and policies proposals should be submitted by member boards. Resolutions are statements of intended and desired legislative action on items of current needs or problems. Resolutions are in effect for one year, and may be submitted on any topic of statewide concern for school board members. Try to be as clear and concise as possible with the wording of your resolution or policy so the intent, as well as the requested action, is understandable. If your resolution or policy is not self-explanatory, include a rationale or history. The committee may also request that you attend and present to the committee, at its summer meeting, to help explain and rationalize your resolution or policy. If your board would like help in drafting a proposal, please contact Emily Webb, VSBA government relations coordinator.

A complete listing of VSBA’s current standing policies and legislative resolutions was distributed in January and can also be found on the VSBA website under our secure/password protected section.

“ **Setting our legislative agenda is a thoughtful, deliberate process... which creates a strong legislative force for the needs of Virginia’s school children.** ”



Governor McAuliffe declares February “School Board Appreciation Month” with Gina Patterson, VSBA executive director; Levar Stoney, secretary of the commonwealth; Anne Holton, secretary of education; Kerri Wilson, VSBA president (Harrisonburg City); and Emily Webb, VSBA government relations coordinator.

White, Michael



UPCOMING VSBA EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING



JIM BEARDEN 3-Part Webinar Series!

**March 25, April 8, and April 22 from
12:30 – 1:30 pm**

Division Leadership & Division Culture: Closing the Gaps Between What Sounds Good & What Gets Done

DETAIL: So what is your division's culture? Is it the words in your literature, or is it the behavior of the people working in your division? The words may describe the professed culture, but the behavior reveals the actual culture. And there are almost always gaps between the words (what sounds good), and the behavior (what gets done). Leadership matters! Effective leadership is essential for closing those gaps. In his 3-part series of webinars for VSBA, Jim Bearden will review, then build on the powerful keynote presentation he made at our 2013 Annual Convention. Sharing additional insights and facilitating hands-on exercises, Jim will provide tools and direction for consciously creating cultures that support behavior essential to division success and student achievement.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO

It's not too late to sign up! If you missed the first webinar, you can view a recorded version "on demand". Contact Samantha S. Bosserman, director of membership services, at samantha@vsba.org for more information.

April 28, 2014 Hot Topic Conference

LOCATION: Norfolk Marriott

DETAIL: This conference will pull together three hot topic issues from across the Commonwealth. First, you will hear from Blaire Denson, the executive director of the Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time. Participants will also hear from the VSBA Task Force on Schools in Challenging Environments with an update on the work that they have been doing for the past six months. Then, a panel of school division representatives will present best practices on meaningful partnerships that divisions can share across county and city lines. Finally, Dr. Mark Lineburg, superintendent of Bristol City Public Schools, and Deborah Keys, director of the Council of Urban Boards of Education at the National School Boards Association, will lead a session discussing the similarities between rural and urban school

divisions, and also address how good board governance can assist schools in challenging environments. We hope that you will join us for what is sure to be an exciting conference.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO

May 20, 2014

WEBINAR - The Responsive Classroom Approach & Student Achievement

*Dr. Sara E. Rimm-Kaufman, professor
Curry School of Education, University of Virginia*

Dr. Rimm-Kaufman will share the results and highlights of a study on a popular teaching technique that can help increase achievement in elementary students. The 2nd through 5th grade students featured in the study were from 24 Virginia elementary schools.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO

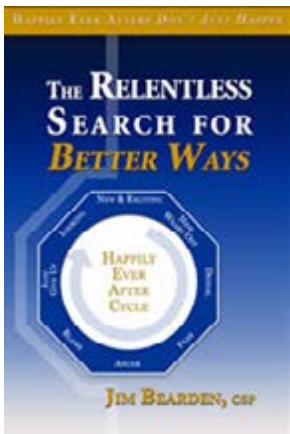
June 6, 2014

School Law Conference

LOCATION: Hilton Short Pump

DETAIL: Learn how cloud-based computing can benefit your school division and what steps you need to take to protect your students by ensuring compliance with FERPA, COPPA and other privacy requirements. Hear U.S. Fourth Circuit Judge Roger Gregory and The Virginia Education Law Group's SM Douglas Guynn team up to lead a special session celebrating the 60th year of Brown vs. Board of Education. They will discuss the legal principles and history of the case, and offer insights about the legal legacy and the legal horizon. Also, hear an update on General Assembly bills and how they impact your local division.

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO



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Highlights from a Successful General Assembly Session

Emily V. Webb, government relations coordinator

The 2014 General Assembly wrapped up its work on March 8th after a long 60 day session. This year, VSBA worked with nearly 200 bills that were directly or indirectly related to K-12 education. We saw a lot of legislation relating to Standards of Learning (SOL) reform, A-F school grading, student discipline, school calendar and student health. We had a number of significant successes in defeating or amending unfavorable legislation and in passing favorable legislation. Here are a few highlights.

- There were several bills relating to the A-F grading system. The Senate supported a three year delay while the House was adamant about a one year delay. Ultimately, the bills were sent to conference and the A-F grading system implementation will be delayed two years.
- There were over 20 bills related to reform of the Virginia SOLs. HB930, sponsored by Delegate Tag Greason, was the vehicle that passed both houses with strong bi-partisan support. This bill reduced SOL assessments in grade 3 through 8 from 22 to 17 assess-

ments. It requires local school boards to certify instruction and the completion of local assessments in the other SOL subject areas. Further, the bill created the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee. The committee, led by the Secretary of Education, will include a variety of stakeholders that are tasked to make recommendations on the SOL assessments; authentic individual student growth measures; and alignment between the SOLs, assessments and the School Performance Report Card. The bill also allows the Board of Education to make future reductions in the number of SOL assessments in grades 3 through 11.

- As with previous years, we saw legislative support for the expansion of virtual education. However, we saw a shift from full-time virtual education to a more customized, blended learning model. HB1115, sponsored by Delegate Tag Greason, expanded Virtual Virginia by authorizing the Department of Education to contract with local school boards that have developed virtual courses to make those virtual courses available to other school boards through Virtual Virginia. VSBA worked extensively with Delegate Greason on this legislation to ensure local choice on any expansion of virtual learning.
- There were several bills relating to suspension and expulsion of students. HB751, sponsored by Delegate Tom Rust, clarified that local school board have discretion in disciplining students for certain drug offenses. Current law requires school boards to expel students for these offenses, but does allow school boards to impose another sanction if warranted by special circumstances. Under this legislation, a school board may still expel a student for drug offenses, but is not required to do so.
- HB752, also sponsored by Delegate Rust, removes the possession of a pneumatic weapon on school grounds from the list of weapons offenses that carry a mandatory sanction of expulsion. This bill still allows school boards to prohibit the possession of pneumatic weapons and to expel students for violating such a policy, but expulsion would no longer be required in these cases.
- As we've seen in past years, there were several "Labor Day" bills relating to local control of the school calendar, including HB333,

SUPERINTENDENT OF INSTRUCTION

On March 31, 2014, Gov. McAuliffe appointed Dr. Steve Staples, executive director of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, as Virginia's next superintendent of instruction.

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Ask the Expert

Q. Can my board hire close family members of a board member?

A. Maybe; it depends on which Planning District the board is in. Va. Code § 2.2-3119. You can learn which Planning District your board is in by **CLICKING HERE.**

STANDUP 4 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stand Up 4 Public Schools

On April 5, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) will officially launch a national campaign called “Stand Up 4 Public Schools” to highlight the successes of public education. The campaign features celebrity advocates and public school graduates, including Sal Kahn (Kahn Academy), Earvin “Magic” Johnson, and Montel Williams. At the March VSBA Board of Directors meeting, the board voted to support the campaign in Virginia.

McAuliffe *Continued from page 1*

suggested strategies for supporting schools and students in challenging environments.

- A request for increased flexibility for local school boards, particularly related to Standards of Quality (SOQ) spending and Standards of Learning (SOL) testing.

The VSBA appreciates the administration inviting Virginia school board members to meet and will proactively pursue continued dialogue.

General Assembly *Continued from page 4*

HB610, and HB577. All of those bills passed the House as expected. Unfortunately, they were never heard in the Senate Education and Health Committee.

- VSBA was successful in defeating HB786, sponsored by Delegate Tony Wilt, which prohibited the dismissal or probation of an employee on the grounds that they possessed an unloaded firearm in a closed container in their vehicle or in a locked trunk, a knife with a metal blade in their vehicle, or an unloaded shotgun in a firearms rack. The possession of a firearm on school property in these limited circumstances is not prohibited by law, but a school board may choose to prohibit it. This bill would have prevented school boards from exercising their authority to prohibit firearms on school property in these circumstances.
- There were a few bills relating to student health issues. HB134 and SB572 both dealt with students with diabetes. Original versions of the bills were very problematic for school boards and administrators, but with significant work and input from VSBA, we were able to amend the bills. The bills require that a student with diabetes, with written parental and prescriber consent, be allowed to carry and use supplies and equipment for immediate treatment of their diabetes. Additionally, it requires the Department of Education to update the Manual for Training Public School Employees in the Administration of Insulin and Glucagon.



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FREE WEBINAR

For more information on the 2014 General Assembly session, please watch the free VSBA Legislative Recap webinar on the VSBA website **HERE.**



Filling Vacancies on Elected School Boards

School boards sometimes find themselves with an unexpected vacancy when, for example, a school board member has to move out of the area for a job change or when illness makes it necessary for a member to resign before the end of the member's term. Even when a vacancy is a surprise, any potential disruption can be minimized by following the procedure for filling a vacancy established by Virginia law.

Filling a vacancy on an elected school board is a two-step process. In the first step, the remaining members of the school board fill the vacancy on an interim basis. They have 45 days to name someone to fill the vacancy on a short-term basis. The interim replacement must be a qualified voter of the election district in which the vacancy has occurred. The person so chosen holds office until the office is filled by a special election.

In the second step, voters choose a replacement to serve the remainder of the term in a special election. Within 15 days of a vacancy, the school board should petition the local circuit court to issue a writ of election to fill the vacancy. The circuit court will issue the writ ordering the election. In some situations, rather than resigning effective immediately, a school board member may give written notification that the member will resign effective on a stated

date in the future. In that situation, the school board may petition the local circuit court to issue a writ of election and the court may issue the writ before the seat is actually vacant. In such a situation, the school board member's resignation cannot be revoked after the date stated for the resignation or after the 45th day before the date set for the special election. The person elected at the special election holds office for the remainder of the regular term of the seat.

Although there are many vacancies across the state in any given year, an individual division may not have dealt with one in several years. A vacancy should not cause a major disruption in a division. Virginia law establishes the necessary procedures for filling a vacancy, and VSBA is happy to help any division that has questions about the statutory process.

Please note: the procedures described above can be found in Va. Code §§ 22.1-57, 24.2-226 and 24.2-228 and apply in most school divisions. However, some divisions are subject to different rules. Whenever there is a vacancy on a school board, legal counsel should be consulted.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Ewing, staff attorney and director of VSBA's legal and policy services.

Two Virginia Educators on National "20 to Watch" List of Education Technology Leaders

The National School Boards Association's (NSBA) Technology Leadership Network announced its "20 to Watch" honorees for 2013-2014. These distinctive education leaders from across the country are being recognized for their ability to inspire colleagues to incorporate innovative technology solutions that contribute to high quality learning environments and more efficient school division operations. Virginia is the only state that has more than one educator on the '20 to Watch' list.

Dr. Barbara Gruber technology resource specialist Loudoun County Public Schools

As a true champion of 21st Century Learning, Barbara Gruber's schools are thriving environments where students become excited about STEM through collaborative projects with peers, both locally and overseas, as they work

on solutions for relevant projects. Students are supported through videoconferencing with field experts; NASA-guided simulations, and the opportunity to create 3-D objects through Makerspace Centers (or innovation labs).

Jennifer Maddux assistant principal Byrd Middle School Henrico County Public Schools

As an assistant principal, Jennifer Maddux has brought life and energy into her school's culture using skills she honed as an Instructional Technology Resource Teacher to facilitate process change and coach teachers in student-centered, engaged instruction. The suite of resources and training portals she developed support the delivery of high-quality, 21st century instruction.



VSBA Board of Directors Member Presents at AASA National Conference

A trio of education advocates from Bristol, VA (Tyrone Foster, school board chair and member of the VSBA Board of Directors; Dr. Mark Lineburg, superintendent; and Rex Gearheart, assistant superintendent) presented at The School Superintendents Association (AASA) national conference. Their hour-long session was titled "Educating Students in Poverty: A Guide for Leaders and Teachers." For more information, visit <http://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=32306>



Eight Virginia School Divisions Earn National Recognition

The following school divisions have been recognized by the 20th annual Magna Awards program sponsored by the National School Boards Association's American School Board Journal. The Magna Awards recognize school boards for taking bold and innovative steps to advance public education, and honors school divisions across the country for outstanding programs that advance student learning and encourage community involvement in schools. An independent panel of school board members, administrators, and other educators selected the winners from nearly 250 submissions. Virginia had more divisions recognized than any other state in the nation.

VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "Parent Connection"
Award: First Place Winner, Over 20,000 Enrollment

ARLINGTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "Second Chance Program"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, Over 20,000 Enrollment

MIDDLESEX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "Navigation 2020: A Strategic Plan for Workforce Development"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, Under 5,000 Enrollment

NEWPORT NEWS CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "NNPS BYOD"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, Over 20,000 Enrollment

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "Gifted Independent Study"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, 5,000-20,000 Enrollment

HARRISONBURG CITY SCHOOLS

Program: "HCPS: STEM from K-12 and beyond"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, 5,000-20,000 Enrollment

DANVILLE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "Gentlemen By Choice"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, 5,000-20,000 Enrollment

SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Program: "Camp Out Rock Out Knockout Homelessness Awareness Event"
Award: Honorable Mention Recipient, Over 20,000 Enrollment

More information on the Magna Awards:
<http://www.asbj.com/magna>

NSBA Annual Presenters from Virginia

The Best of Both Digital Learning Worlds: Cloud Computing and BYOD

Prince William County Schools

Today's students are growing up in a digital world where technology breaks down the barriers of resources, geography, and time to access information 24/7. Prince William County Public Schools has embraced this digital movement through cloud computing. In this session, attendees will learn how to implement cloud computing as it relates to instruction and network capacity/reliability, and understand the benefits of cloud computing with BYOD to enhance student learning through the use of tools such as Google Apps for Education.

Bridging the Gap Between School and Home with Mobile Devices

Henry County Public Schools

Learn how to put your mobile devices to use 24/7 and better engage parents and students during non-school hours.

Crowdsourcing and Transparency for Community-Based Decision-Making

Arlington Public Schools

Crowdsourcing is the practice of obtaining ideas or solutions by soliciting feedback from a larger community of people, especially an online community. Arlington Public Schools has developed new tools to foster greater transparency and participation: the Dashboard promotes public ownership of progress in meeting Strategic Plan goals; the Online Budget Tool challenges stakeholders to try their hand at balancing the budget; and implementation of unique software asked residents help with redistricting. Extraordinary public support resulted.

Thanks again to MB Kahn Construction and Moseley Architects for their generous donations to keep the VSBA Breakfast at the NSBA Convention free to our members.

“ Virginia had more divisions recognized than any other state in the nation. ”



Student Art Contest

The VSBA student art contest is held in conjunction with the VSBA Regional Spring Network Forums. For detailed information, please download the following: <http://www.vaschoolboards.org/images/uploads/2014ArtContestInformation.pdf>

2014 VSBA Regional Spring Network Forum Schedule

TIDEWATER – Complete

NORTHEASTERN – Complete

EASTERN – Complete

SOUTHSIDE – Wednesday, April 9

CENTRAL – Monday, April 21

VALLEY – Wednesday, April 23

SOUTHERN – Wednesday, April 30

BLUE RIDGE – Wednesday, May 7

SOUTHWEST – Thursday, May 8

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VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association

MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

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