



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

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER 19-21
Annual Convention

DECEMBER 16-18
Webinar – Budget & Finance

JANUARY 12
Webinar – FOIA

JANUARY 26
Capital Conference

JANUARY 27
New Chair/Member/
Superintendent Orientation

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is my final newsletter article so I will keep it brief, I promise. It's been an honor and privilege to serve as president of this organization. I have spent the past year traveling around the Commonwealth visiting schools. While I was able to get to many divisions, I have found myself filled with regret that I was not able to visit each and every one.

I have learned so much from my site visits. I have learned that each division is unique, yet there are more similarities than differences in the challenges our schools face; regardless of location, size, type, or grade level. I have learned that each division has success stories; they have developed and implemented great programs that work to move students forward on their educational journey. I have learned that each school division has areas that they continue to struggle with finding the right program that will work for their school culture. I have been most impressed with the innovation, creativity, dedication, determination, commitment, and enthusiasm that I have seen

in every locality. It has been inspiring, to say the least.

All of these things I have learned reinforce the message I have conveyed throughout the year; we can and should learn from one another, we can and should help one another, and without a doubt, we are stronger together than we are as individuals. **Virginia, we are ONE!**

At every school I visited, I was impressed with how devoted the teachers, administrators, and school board members were to meeting the needs of their children. There are many challenges facing education today, but having caring people in charge of Virginia's public schools is not one of them. Thank you for all that you do as leaders, supporters, and advocates of public education. I appreciate the hard work and efforts your put forth to provide our students with the lifelong opportunities that will come with having a quality education. I have enjoyed this journey and am sad to see it end. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your president.

Mentors Needed

Do you remember your first years on the school board and wish someone had been there for you to call with questions or for advice? Are you an experienced school board member who would like to share your knowledge and experience with new school board members?

It is important that new educational leaders are supported to help them be successful in their new role. Mentoring provides a discreet and effective means of providing this support in a way that is rewarding for experienced board members.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Peter J. Sengenberger, VSBA assistant executive director, at peter@vsba.org.



VSBA President Kerri Wilson visits Manassas City Public Schools as part of her yearlong listening tour



Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2014 VSBA Delegate Assembly sets Association's legislative positions

VSBA's annual delegate assembly will take place at the Williamsburg Doubletree on November 20 as part of the VSBA Annual Convention. By now, you should have appointed your official delegate and alternate to represent your school division. The delegate assembly handbook was sent out to all board members electronically on October 1.

About the Delegate Assembly

Each year, the VSBA Legislative Positions Committee solicits input from all Virginia school boards on issues affecting public education. The committee meets in the summer to analyze proposals and forward suggested positions to the VSBA Board of Directors for final approval. The delegate assembly acts on these proposals, which the staff/lobbyists use to create a comprehensive legislative agenda.

Who should attend?

All school board members are encouraged to attend the delegate assembly. Only one board member per division may vote on each issue. While legislative representation from each division normally serve as delegates to the assembly, voting credentials may be shared among attending board members at each board's discretion.

See you in Williamsburg!

VSBA Task Force Meets With Governor McAuliffe to Review Report Outlining Strategies for Assisting Schools in Challenging Environments



From left to right: Gina G. Patterson, VSBA executive director; Dr. Mark Lineburg, superintendent, Winchester City Public Schools; Governor Terry McAuliffe; Rodney Jordan, board member, Norfolk City Public Schools; Peter Sengenberger, VSBA assistant executive director; Virginia Secretary of Education Anne Holton.

Rodney Jordan (Norfolk City School Board) and Dr. Mark Lineburg (Winchester City Schools), co-chairs of the VSBA Task Force on Schools in Challenging Environments, met with Governor McAuliffe and Secretary of Education Anne Holton to present the task force's report outlining suggestions for assisting struggling schools. The report outlines suggestions on ways various stakeholder groups, including school boards, the General Assembly, and local communities can work together to further

improve Virginia's K-12 education system. School board members are encouraged to download the **full report here**.

The task force was created by the VSBA Board of Directors in June 2013 as a result of requests for assistance and concern among VSBA member boards related to school divisions struggling to reach their most challenged student populations.

In addition to developing the task force report, other highlights of the task force include hosting members of the Virginia Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction at a task force meeting; presenting to the Virginia Board of Education; holding a "VSBA Dialogue on Challenged Schools" roundtable discussion session with key stakeholder groups; having a "Schools in Challenging Environments" track at the VSBA Annual Convention; and hosting "The School Board's Role in School Improvement and Turnaround Conference", a one-day conference held with the Virginia Department of Education, the Center on School Turnaround, and the Academic Development Institute.



Establishing a Strong Foundation: Developing Facilities Guidelines Rooted in Your Strategic Plan and Educational Best Practices



By Bill Bradley, PhD, AIA; Principal, Stantec Architecture

Does your district have standards to guide the design of its capital projects? Most do. Do your standards establish the kinds and quantities of spaces to be included in your various facilities? Most do. Do the standards enumerate your preferences for systems and materials to be specified as part of the contract documents? Many do. Are your district's standards rooted in your strategic plan and educational best practices? Most are not, and therefore run the risk of being invalid.

Many facilities guidelines are developed from the perspective of project managers charged with overseeing construction or directors of facilities charged with maintaining buildings post-completion. While both perspectives are important, they are just two of several to consider when leveraging the tremendous opportunity that renovating a facility or building a new school affords. The perspectives of those charged with setting the course for and delivering education in those schools – the school board, school administrators, and professional educators – should also be in the mix, and the single best repository of their collective insight is your district's strategic plan. But how does that result in facilities guidelines?

At their root, strategic plans are comprised of "beliefs" that serve as the foundation for all efforts. Examples of beliefs with direct implications for the planning, design, and construction of learning environments include statements like:

- All who share our schools deserve a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment.
- Students' learning opportunities are enhanced when multiple approaches to learning are provided and positive relationships are formed.

Underpinning the beliefs embodied in strategic plans are "strategies" and "actions" that provide focus and accountability. Examples with *direct* implications for facilities include:

- Maintain the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants.
- Develop and implement approved facilities guidelines.

- Utilize environmentally-friendly materials, equipment, and emerging strategies.

The following is an example related to instruction with *indirect*, but significant, implications for facilities:

- Provide researched-based curriculum and instructional methods that facilitate achievement for all students.

While this last example might seem standard, it acknowledges research on learning styles and suggests a strategy advocating facilities be designed to support collaborative, hands-on, digital and self-directed learning opportunities along with more traditional forms of teacher-guided instruction.

These and other examples establish the requirement for facilities guidelines (sometimes called "educational specifications") and provide the guidance necessary to develop them. The

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Celebrating Our 6th Anniversary Serving the Families and Students of Virginia



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2014 VSBA Annual Convention
Nov. 19–21 | Williamsburg, VA.

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Facilities Guidelines *Continued from page 3*

latter is absolutely essential because only those elements that can be tied back to the strategic plan are unquestionably valid. If, like many school divisions, you view the development of new standards as an opportunity to raise the bar, making connections to your strategic plan is the place to begin.

Once central themes have been mined from your district's strategic plan - or mission statement absent a plan - the next step in developing your facilities guidelines is to poll educators and pull from the literature to determine links between facilities and educational best practices. Seminal works from Howard Gardner on multiple intelligences and Dunn and Dunn on learning modes, for instance, are often referenced, as are topics more directly linked to facilities such as information about learner-centered environments, adaptability, learning landscapes, buildings as teaching tools, interior design, educational furnishings, acoustics, sustainable design, and safety and security. Determining which topics should be covered in your guidelines will depend upon your district's strategic plan and other circumstances, but providing some reference to educational best practices as a means for guiding architects and engineers, who are neither educators nor necessarily well-versed in the latest dialogue about instruction and delivery, is essential.

Only after direct links have been made to your district's strategic plan and educational best practices should your facilities guidelines converge around more quantifiable information.

The kinds and quantities of spaces to be included, the specification of systems and materials, and any other particulars related to the construction and eventual operation and maintenance of the building are all factors that must be addressed. Even then, all of those more tangible elements should be filtered through the lens of the strategic plan and educational best practices. You may discover that the default is no longer applicable.

Regardless of what is included, your educational specifications should provide the guidance necessary to ensure that your school facilities are planned and designed to support the mission and vision of your district. Further, the document should seek to align the philosophical and pedagogical beliefs of your school board as articulated in your district's strategic plan with the qualities and characteristics of the learning environments in which the district's strategic objectives for instruction and delivery are realized. In this manner, you can be assured that your standards are valid, that everyone is on the same page, and that your district's mission or strategic plan is being advanced.

If talk of leveraging capital opportunities to raise the bar in your district piques your interest, please join us for a more in-depth conversation at the VSBA Annual Convention in Williamsburg in November. Four experienced panelists will take your questions and share "10 Things You Should Know Before You Decide To Build." The session will be held Thursday, November 20th at 9:30 in room 2/3.

November is Take Your Legislator to School Month

If you haven't already extended an invitation to your local legislators, it's not too late! Take Your Legislator to School Month is the perfect opportunity to promote closer relationships between school divisions, local communities and our elected officials, while also 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. Be sure to send the VSBA photos and stories of Take Your Legislator to School Month "in action", so that we can profile your activities. This year, the VSBA encourages school divisions to choose an area of focus for your legislative visits. For example, you may decide to have "VSBA Take Your Legislator to CTE School Month" or

"VSBA Take Your Legislator to STEM School Month". This will allow you to emphasize particular aspects of the division that you are most proud of or wish to highlight.

CLICK TO VIEW VSBA PSA 



DOWNLOAD TODAY!



Advocacy in Action: Engaging Business Leaders as Partners in Education

We have all heard the statistics; the United States has a skills deficit in our workforce. Administration officials and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce often speak about attracting businesses to the Commonwealth and the importance that education plays in economic development. We must continue to improve the quality of our workforce to maintain our competitive position within an ever-changing, fast-paced global economy. Business leaders can be key partners in education, which is why the **October VSBA Action Alert** focused on engaging business leaders in your community.

Recently, Shenandoah County Public School leaders, representatives from Lord Fairfax Work Force Solutions, and officials from Shenandoah County's Economic Development Council collaborated to host a roundtable discussion with Shenandoah County business and industry

industry, as they go hand in hand. Business in Shenandoah County will be successful with an educated, career-ready workforce that has the skills to be successful in the future economy. And of course, with support from industry and business, our kids and community will benefit exponentially. This effort is 100% in the best interest of our community as a whole."

For the first meeting, Dr. Jeremy Raley, superintendent of Shenandoah County Public Schools, served as the facilitator that was held at SCPS' Triplett Tech. Dr. Raley remarked, "Business, public education, economic development, and higher education are all working together to collaborate so that our community can continue to be a place where people want to live and work. Education plays a critical role in the development of our current and future workforce. I'm thankful that representatives from local business, higher education, and county government invested their time in today's roundtable discussion."

The SCPS roundtable is a prime example of advocacy in action, bringing together sector leaders to discuss challenges, successes, and potential partnerships for public education. Other ways to engage with business and industry could include presentations by school board members at local economic development association meetings or invitations to visit career and technical education programs in your schools.

SCPS and their partners will host another business roundtable discussion in January 2015 as part of their continued advocacy efforts. We encourage you to continue your advocacy efforts and share your success stories with VSBA. **Your voice is making a difference in your schools, community and in Richmond.**



leaders. The roundtable discussion focused on how these groups might partner to best create a workforce that will contribute to a "thriving Shenandoah County economy."

"The Symposium was a great first step towards forming a true, purposeful partnership between the business community and the school division that only naturally makes sense. It was made obvious today that the local business community sees the value in a strong educational system to attract, retain and build their workforce of tomorrow," Katie Freakley, Shenandoah County School Board member explained, "The benefits of collaboration on this level could mean big things for Shenandoah County. It's a win/win for education and

Do you have a successful advocacy story to share?

Contact Emily Webb, VSBA government relations coordinator, at emily@vsba.org.



Join us for a cookie at Booth # 61 and 62





COMMUNICATIONS TIP

Prioritize Internal Communications

With limited time and resources, it can be a challenge determining where to best focus our communications efforts. Do we build a new web site, produce a division newsletter, enhance our social media presence, etc.? Considering that most school divisions are one of largest employers in most communities and “word of mouth” is still the most common and trusted source of education related news (according to a Brookings Institution study), one of the best things you can do is improve your internal/staff/organizational communications. Think about all of the people your staff interact with, not only those who have ties to the schools (like parents), but also those who may not have direct ties to the schools (like retirees). As an employee of the division, your staff

members are considered “experts” on what is taking place in the division, and you better believe that each staff member has an opinion on division programs, goals, and leadership. Therefore, we need to ensure that our staff have up-to-date, accurate information, and that they feel that they are a valued part of the division. We can have the best web sites and slickest newsletters, but if our staff have inaccurate information or are saying negative things in the community, their “word of mouth” trumps all.

Interested in communications-related training and board development? Contact Peter J. Sengenberger, assistant executive director, at peter@vsba.org.



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**2014 Media Honor Roll
– Additional Nominees**

In addition to the reporters and media outlets listed in Issue 7 of our newsletter, the following reporters are also part of the VSBA’s 2014 Media Honor Roll.

Culpeper County Public Schools

Rhonda Simmons, Culpeper Star-Exponent
Jonathan Krawchuk, Culpeper Media Network

Reporters and local media outlets play an important role in public education. School division leaders rely on responsible reporting by local media representatives so that our community members receive timely information about division initiatives and programs. Considering the impact that media coverage can have on community attitudes and beliefs, the *Media Honor Roll* was created to recognize fair and balanced reporting about our schools and Virginia’s public education system.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

VSBA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2014

Convention Overview

Wednesday, November 19

- 8:30 - 5:30** Registration
- 9:30 - Noon** Early Bird Sessions
Pre-registration Required
- 11:30 - 1:30** Student Achievement Fair
- 2:00 - 4:00** General Session
Sponsored by Sodexo
Student Video Contest Winners Announced!
- 4:00 - 4:30** Break
- 4:30 - 5:30** Regional Meetings
- 5:30 - 7:00** President's Reception
Sponsored by VACORP
- 9:00 - 11:00** Education Celebration
Reception/Dance
Entertainment Sponsored by RRMM—
Musician Charles "CC" Carter



Thursday, November 20

- 7:00** 11th Annual VSBA 5K Walk/Run
Sponsored by BCWH, Thompson Consulting Engineers, VS America, Inc., and Draper Arden Associates
- 8:00 - 9:15** Continental Breakfast
- 8:30 - 9:15** General Session
- 9:30 - 12:00** Breakout Sessions
- 12:00 - 2:00** Complimentary Boxed Lunch & Exclusive Exhibit Hall Hours
- 2:00 - 4:00** VASS Workshop
- 2:00 - 4:30** Breakout Sessions
- 2:00 - 4:30** VSBA Delegate Assembly
- 4:30 - 6:00** VSBA Tailgate Reception
Photo Booth 
- 7:30 - 12:00** Moseley Architects' Game Night



Friday, November 21

- 8:30 - 11:00** General Session
Sit-down Breakfast
- 11:00** Adjourn

Don't Miss Out!






- Student Achievement Fair
- Exhibitors Scholarship
- Daily General Sessions
- High School Video Contest
- Exhibition of School Architecture
- Breakout Session Tracks
- Daily Door Prizes
- Regional Meetings
- Networking Stations

REGISTER ONLINE
Registration increases by \$50
after November 7!

SCHED Online Convention Scheduling

SCHED is an online scheduling program that allows you to view full session information prior to the convention, with biographies on the session speakers, links to helpful information, sorting capabilities by presentation topic, and much more! SCHED is also mobile-ready, and you can create a profile to save and organize the sessions that you would like to attend while in Williamsburg.

Check out our color-coded session tracks!

-  Magna Award–Winners Track
-  School Construction Track
-  School Law Track
-  Schools in Challenging Environments Track
-  Virtual/Blended Learning Track

**Schedule Online
HERE**



IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

VSBA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2014

General Session Speakers:



Coach Bill Curry
Coach, Communicator,
Educator, Motivator, Author

Bill Curry has had a very distinguished career having played pro football and then serving as a college coach. He will share stories of teamwork and diversity that will motivate you to begin looking at situations in your own schools very differently. For more information about Coach Curry, [click here](#).



Melissa A. Porfirio, M.Ed.
Virginia Teacher of the Year

Melissa A. Porfirio, a first grade teacher at Crestwood Elementary School in Fairfax County, is the 2014 Virginia Teacher of the Year and Region 4 Teacher of the Year. A teacher for eight years, Porfirio earned a bachelor's degree in social work from Catholic University and a master's degree in education, curriculum and instruction from George Mason University.



Dianne Durkin
President and Founder
of Loyalty Factor

The topic of this session will be The Power of Magnetic Leadership. If you have weak or non-existent leadership in your organization, it is like spraying a big can of people repellent into the air that your employees breathe. You kill creativity, productivity, and the spark that motivates your team. The good news is you can become a magnetic leader—that force that attracts others.

Dianne will also be available to sign copies of her book immediately after the closing session.



ANNUAL CONVENTION
NOVEMBER 19-21, 2014
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA



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11th Annual VSBA 5K Walk/Run

We are one month out from the 11th annual VSBA 5k walk/run, so our team at BCWH thought we'd have a little fun and ask two veteran VSBA 5k racers from our office to share some advice and answer a couple of questions.

Legal

Ask the Expert

Q. What happens when a school board's vote ends in a tie?

A. It depends on a couple of things. First, if a tie vote occurs when all board members are not present, the question is passed by until the next meeting. If there is still a tie vote at the next meeting, or if there is a tie vote when all the members of the board are present, the procedure depends on whether or not the board has a tie breaker. If the board does have a tie breaker, the clerk immediately notifies the tie breaker and asks the tie breaker to attend the meeting in order to vote to break the tie. If the tie breaker cannot attend that meeting, a date for a future meeting will be set. If the tie breaker needs time to become fully informed on the issue involved in the vote, the tie breaker is entitled to delay the vote. When the tie breaker votes, the tie is broken and the matter is decided in accordance with his vote. If the board does not have a tie breaker, the motion on which the vote is taken fails.



Charles Piper, Principal

What's your favorite thing about running in the VSBA 5k?

Camaraderie with other conference attendees.

What do you eat to fuel for the race?

Granola bars and orange juice.

What's your strategy for this year's race?

Pace myself and keep it fun.

What's your goal for this year's race?

Stay under 30 minutes.

Any tips on what to wear for the race?

Layers—you can always peel one off to cool down.

For more information on the race, including the course map, please [CLICK HERE](#).



Kylan Shirley, Architect *(On a much lighter note...)*

What's your favorite thing about running in the VSBA 5k?

All the runners are really happy to be out there.

What do you eat to fuel for the race?

A couple of chocolate donuts.

What's your strategy for this year's race?

Hide Charles Piper's shoes.

What's your goal for this year's race?

Beat Charles Piper.

Any tips on what to wear for the race?

The shorter the shorts, the faster you'll run.

be more flexible
regular fitness walking promotes flexibility and good posture

VSBA
Virginia School Boards Association

join us for the 11th annual
VSBA 5K walk / run
promoting physical activity in schools

virginia school boards association
annual convention,
Williamsburg, VA

November 20, 2014
7:00am

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Don't Miss Out!

In addition to terrific student performances, Annual Convention attendees will have the opportunity to see Charles "CC" Carter at Wednesday night's Education Celebration Dance, as well as Celeste Kellogg, actress/songwriter/Nashville recording artist, at the Thursday morning General Session.





UPCOMING **VSBA** EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

November 18, 2014

VSBA/ASFA Education Foundation Workshop

LOCATION: *Doubletree by Hilton Williamsburg*

DETAIL: The VSBA and the American Schools Foundation Alliance (ASFA) 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 The Virginia Society of CPAs discussing tax, auditing and budgeting; a branding and marketing presentation; and fundraising ideas from foundations throughout the U.S. There will also be a chance to share best practices and pick up some great tools that you can use as soon as you return to your foundation.

November 19 – 21, 2014

2014 VSBA Workshop for School Board Clerks

LOCATION: *Kingsmill Resort, Williamsburg*

DETAIL: The School Board Clerks Planning committee has been working hard to develop an interesting and exciting workshop! This year, clerks will have the opportunity to attend the VSBA Annual Convention general sessions; participate in roundtable discussions to develop the clerks code of conduct; hear a presentation on working with new board members and superintendents; learn about legal hot topics from VSBA Director of Legal and Policy Services Elizabeth Ewing; review important information on records retention; and more!

December 16 – 18, 2014

Budget & Finance 101 (3-Part Webinar Series)

PRESENTER: Leigh Burden, assistant superintendent of business and finance, Loudoun County Public Schools

DETAIL: During session one (Tuesday, December 16, 2014, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM), Virginia public school budgeting will be discussed, including roles of elected officials, fiduciary requirements, stakeholders, and budget reports. Session two (Wednesday, December 17, 2014, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM) will address revenue, including state formulas, federal funding, local funding, and tax rates. Expenditures will also be discussed,

including enrollment, staffing, salaries, and employee benefits. The final session (Thursday, December 18, 2014, 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM) will discuss “odds and ends” of school division finance, including audits, school activity funds, quarterly reports fund balances, and misinformation.

January 12, 2015

from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm.

FOIA—Excessive Burden or Essential to Democracy? (Webinar)

PRESENTERS: Elizabeth Ewing, VSBA director of legal and policy services; Stacy Haney, VSBA lobbyist and attorney with Reed Smith

The Freedom of Information Act has the laudable purpose of ensuring that citizens have ready access to public records and to the meetings in which the business of the public is conducted. To the members of a public body, however, FOIA may sometimes seem like a hindrance to smooth operation. The webinar will help school board members understand the purposes and requirements of FOIA and how to best meet those requirement in a legally defensible, efficient and fair manner.

For information on any of these opportunities, visit the “Meetings & Conferences” tab on the VSBA web site: www.vsba.org



Experience matters.

VSBA superintendent searches have been responsible for the placement of 74 of the current Virginia school division superintendents.

For more information, contact Gina G. Patterson, VSBA executive director, at gina@vsba.org or 434-295-8722.



NSBA CUBE Honors Dr. Elizabeth Daniels

The National School Boards Association's Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) honored Dr. Elizabeth Daniels, Portsmouth City School Board and VSBA Past President 2006, with the 2014 Benjamin Elijah Mays Lifetime Achievement Award. Dr. Daniels passed away in April of this year. The award was received in her honor by Portsmouth City School Board members Linda Ridenour and Keith Nance.



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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.