



**VSBA President  
Juandiego Wade**  
Charlottesville City School Board

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

**The Data Solution**  
(Guest Article)  
Page 3

**TYLTSM Success Stories**  
Page 4

**Enrollment Projections**  
Page 6

**Video Contest & Scholarships**  
Page 8

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**DECEMBER 16-18**  
Webinar—Budget & Finance

**JANUARY 12**  
Webinar—FOIA

**JANUARY 26-27**  
Capital Conference

**JANUARY 27**  
New Chair/Member/Superintendent Orientation

**FEBRUARY**  
School Board Appreciation Month

**FEBRUARY 16-20**  
Clerk Appreciation Week

## MEET JUANDIEGO WADE, VSBA'S NEW PRESIDENT

Juandiego Wade, who has served on the Charlottesville City School Board since 2006, was named president of the Virginia School Boards Association at the association's annual convention. Juan has held several leadership positions with the VSBA, most recently as president-elect. He has served on various association committees and task forces, including the federal relations committee, finance/audit committee, and the VSBA Task Force on Schools in Challenging Environments. Additionally, Juan has been a part of the National School Boards Association Delegate Assembly for the past three years, and has served as vice-chairman and chairman of the Charlottesville City School Board.

### What can you tell us about yourself?

I was born and raised in Richmond, VA. My entire education has been through public education – from Richmond PS to Norfolk State to the University of Virginia. I attended Woodville ES, Ginter Park ES, Bellevue ES, JEB Stuart ES, Albert MS, Mosby MS and George Wythe HS. I received my BA from Norfolk State University in Urban Planning and a Master in Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia.

I am married to my wife of 21 years, Claudette Grant. We met at graduate school at the University of Virginia. We have a daughter, Gabriella Wade. She is in the 7th grade at Buford Middle School. My mother-in-law, Ruby Grant, now lives with us. I have five brothers and sisters that live in the Richmond/Chesterfield area.

I am a career counselor with the Albemarle County Department of Social Services. Every day, I get the opportunity to help the unemployed, underemployed and recent graduates (from high school and college) find meaningful employment. It is very rewarding. On many occasions, it allows me to see firsthand the products of public education and how they are prepared for employment.

### What led you to run for the school board?

I ran for the Charlottesville City School Board because I wanted to make a difference at the policy level. I had been a mentor in the Charlottesville community for many years. My fraternity mentored a group of young men from the 5th grade to their graduation. During that

period, I worked closely with students, parents and schools and saw opportunities where there could have been better communication and other improvements from the school administration. When the group of mentees graduated in 2005, it was an opportune time for me to run for school board. It was the first time Charlottesville had an elected school board election.

### How long have you been volunteering?

I believe, at my core, that giving back makes a difference. I have been volunteering since high school as a Grey Coat at Chippenham Hospital (they could not bring themselves to call us Candy Strippers). I continued to volunteer in college. I now volunteer with several organizations in the Charlottesville community including 100 Black Men of Central Virginia, United Way, and at my church, Olivet Presbyterian. I cherish them all. I thoroughly enjoy mentoring and serving those that are in most need in our community.

### Why did you become more actively involved with the VSBA?

I wanted to make a contribution to VSBA and volunteered to serve on various VSBA committees. I was then asked to serve on the VSBA Board of Directors to replace a member that had moved out of state. I knew this organization was truly dedicated to public education and supporting school boards throughout the Commonwealth from my first meeting. I have learned so much being involved with VSBA. It has allowed me to become a more effective school board member and I have met so many wonderful people throughout the Commonwealth.

### Tell us about being elected VSBA president; what does it mean to you?

Becoming the president of VSBA is a tremendous honor for me. There are so many truly principled people involved with VSBA and public education. I don't want to let them down. I am looking forward to the challenge of representing VSBA.

### What are your goals as VSBA president?

My primary goal as president of the VSBA is to focus on student achievement. That is what we are all here for—student achievement. I will lead,

*Continued on page 5*



**Gina G. Patterson**  
VSBA Executive Director

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### VSBA: A member driven association

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. VSBA serves divisions of every type. 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 has never been, nor will ever be, simply a state driven organization in Charlottesville. Rather, it represents the collective work of 132 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 adopt at the annual convention includes the collective insight of every board in the association that is represented at the delegate assembly. The legislative policies and resolutions adopted at the delegate assembly identify the positions of the association so that that staff have guidance when supporting/opposing legislation on various issues. There are times when individual board members or boards reprimand staff for its lobbying of certain issues that are in disagreement with their own preferences, but the positions taken by VSBA staff and promoted to the membership result from a majority vote of the delegate assembly. VSBA is an association of school boards and represents the viewpoints of schools boards as determined by their representative to the delegate assembly.

The association is not moved by any agenda or political party, nor driven by a personal agenda. It was developed by those board members that served before you and is continued by your knowledge and the knowledge of your peers. This process was reaffirmed at the 2014 VSBA Delegate Assembly in Williamsburg on November 20th. The revised legislative policies and resolutions of the association have been adopted, and are being printed in the 2015 VSBA Legislative Positions handbook. The handbook will be sent to all members, superintendents, state legislators and administration officials, the Virginia Congressional Delegation and federal agency officials in early January.

Thank you for your leadership and support. I look forward to seeing you all at the Capital Conference on January 26th in Richmond. Happy Holidays!

## COMMUNICATIONS TIP: What is increased rigor?

Often, when talking about SOLs, whether we are referring to past scores or upcoming tests, the phrase "increased rigor" is often used to describe the more exacting and every-challenging nature of Virginia's standardized tests. A problem is that this term doesn't mean much to many people. Google "increased rigor" and you will see that the vast majority of the results are related to classroom instruction, tests, standards, etc. Therefore, to some this phrase just sounds like education jargon.

*So what is the solution?*

Beyond simply stating that tests, standards, and instruction have "increased rigor," it is important to show stakeholders what rigor looks like. For instance, show examples of released test items at board meetings, to visiting legislators and local officials, in your division newsletter, and anywhere else you have the opportunity to interact with stakeholders.

*Don't just tell them about increased rigor—show them!*

### Interested in communications-related training and board development?

Contact  
Peter J. Sengenberger,  
assistant executive  
director, at  
[peter@vsba.org](mailto:peter@vsba.org).



**Patte Barth**  
Director, NSBA Center for  
Public Education

## The Data Solution

These are challenging times for school districts. Public schools are being called upon to make sure every student who enters their doors graduates prepared for college and 21st century jobs. And they must meet this charge while their budgets are stretched nearly to the breaking point. Districts are simply being asked to produce better results with fewer resources. This leaves school leaders little margin for error in carrying out their governance duties. Every dollar and every decision must count toward better student outcomes.

This is where data helps. Data that is timely and credible takes the guesswork out of decision making by grounding it in evidence. Our research at the Center for Public Education shows that among the characteristics exhibited by effective school boards is that they are “data savvy; they embrace and monitor data ... and use it to drive continuous improvement.” Other characteristics, such as being “accountability driven” and “focused on student achievement,” cannot be practiced well without the use of data (CPE, 2011).

But we have also found that many school board members aren’t always comfortable examining the data they’re provided, much less asking their superintendent for more. Even school board members who use data in their day jobs may hesitate to dig into school data that is outside their professional area of expertise.

To encourage school boards to use data more often and to use it effectively, CPE led an effort to develop training and tools to help non-statisticians understand what school data says about the quality of the education districts provide now as well as how data can lead to policies and practices to improve future outcomes. This initiative -- what we call Data First – was a partnership with state school board associations in California, Illinois and Michigan and piloted in six school districts in those states.

The central part of the training is a process for data-based decision making that, true to the research, emphasizes using data for continuous improvement. This is not to suggest that data for accountability is not important. Certainly, school boards exist as the community’s eyes and ears into how public schools conduct their business. At the same time, using data solely for that purpose leaves a lot of good cards on the table. Accountability data like the previous year’s test scores can tell you what happened but the result will not change. For continuous improvement, school boards need to examine other data, too. This data will lead you to what you can alter in order to move your school district to the results you want.

The process we developed for effective data-based decision making begins with accountability data but involves so much more, as follows:

1. Baseline data to set direction: This data will highlight areas where your schools are strong and those that are weak so you can identify where you need to focus your attention. Test scores and other indicators of student achievement like graduation rates are just one way to look at where you are. As important is your school environment: Do schools provide a positive climate for learning? Do students and teachers feel safe and supported? The answers to baseline questions enable you to set your goals for improvement.
2. Resource data to support your goals: The obvious first question here is, is there adequate funding? But resources are more than dollars. Indeed the greatest resource a district has are the educators who staff your schools. What are the qualifications of your teachers? Is teacher quality distributed equitably throughout the district so every child has fair access to good teachers? Your facilities and technology also come into play. All should be aligned to your goals.
3. Program data to define your strategies for meeting your goals: Do all students have access to rigorous curriculum? Do you provide extra support for students who need it? Do teachers and principals have the data they need to track individual students? Do they have adequate professional development opportunities? and finally,
4. Outcome data to monitor progress: Did student achievement improve as a result of your strategies? Did you meet your goals? If not, adjustments are called for, and the outcome data thus becomes your baseline data for a new cycle of data decision making.

School boards face an enormous challenge in meeting the needs of all students while balancing the books. This sometimes demands very tough choices. Data may not make these decisions easy ones. But it will help re-assure boards and their communities that their decisions are the right ones. As we say here at CPE, the data made me do it.

NSBA's  
**Advocacy  
Institute**  
Washington, DC  
February 1-3, 2015  
[CLICK HERE](#)

*Patte Barth is director of the Center for Public Education, an initiative of the National School Boards Association. Learn more about the effective use of data at [www.data-first.org](http://www.data-first.org).*



## Another Successful “Take Your Legislator to School” Month



**Rappahannock County Public Schools**



**Hampton City Public Schools**



**Henry County Public Schools**



**Bristol City Public Schools**



**Westmoreland County Public Schools**



**Goochland County Public Schools**

In an effort to promote a closer relationship between public education and the Virginia General Assembly, the VSBA urged each school division in the state to invite at least one of their state legislators to visit their schools during the month of November. In support of our initiatives, Governor McAuliffe proclaimed November as “VSBA Take Your Legislator to School” month. We saw and heard from so many of you about your successful visits, meetings, breakfasts and dinners with your local legislators. Following are just a few highlights:

■ The Bristol City School Board welcomed Senator Bill Carrico and Delegate Israel O’Quinn to their “Take Your Legislators to Lunch” program. Discussion topics ranged, but the main focus was funding for public education. Superintendent Rex Gearheart said to both Carrico and O’Quinn, “Teachers don’t make a lot of money, everybody knows that. But those are good, middle-class jobs. Teachers can buy homes and their kids go to your schools. When you talk about cuts, that’s where we’ll cut. Please remind your colleagues and other elected officials -- when this comes up -- cuts to education mean cuts to Virginia jobs.”

■ In Henry County, Senator Bill Stanley and Delegate Les Adams visited the Magna Vista Warriors. The legislators learned about the nationally acclaimed horticulture program, the only program of its kind in the area. Students enrolled in horticulture expand their knowledge of science and art during a sequence of courses that includes instruction in floral design, landscape design, and plant production and management.

■ Delegate Margaret Ransone visited Montross Middle School in Westmoreland County. During her visit, she visited several classes in session and was the guest of honor at a 7th grade assembly where she spoke on the topic of bullying and how important to understand how one’s actions affect others. Following her remarks, the delegate hosted a question and answer period where students peppered her with numerous questions, including how to pass a bill, the duties of a legislator, and how voting districts are formed. Additionally, Lesley Nash’s 7th grade history class presented PowerPoints that they had completed on the Virginia legislature to Delegate Ransone. The students were invited to visit Richmond during

the upcoming General Assembly session and watch the state government in action. A field trip is being planned for February 2015.

■ The Carroll County School Board welcomed Senator Bill Stanley and Delegate Jeff Campbell and expressed concerns about the upcoming budget year and other issues. The legislators enjoyed the day as they were treated to a breakfast of local foods made by the Carroll County High School culinary arts class and saw the historic new STEM Lab, as well as cutting-edge technology used in the division’s pre-engineering class.

■ Delegate Michael Webert attended the Veteran’s Day celebration at Rappahannock County Public Schools. He was welcomed by guest speaker and school board chairman, John Lesinski. Delegate Webert was also a guest at Rappahannock County High School government classes and 7th grade civics classes at Rappahannock County Elementary School.

■ The Hampton City School Board joined forces with the Hampton City Council and Delegates Mamie BaCote, Gordon Helsel, Jeion Ward and Senators Mamie Locke and John Miller for the ribbon cutting at Kecoughtan High School’s Governor’s Architecture and Applied Arts STEM Academy. After the ribbon cutting, legislators toured the new academy, the Spratley Gifted Center and Cary Elementary.

■ In Goochland County, Senator John Garrett joined Superintendent James Layne to tour Goochland Tech to learn about their CTE programs.

Thank you to all of our school divisions who participated in VSBA Take Your Legislator to School Month. Each of you worked to develop a closer relationship between your school division, community and elected officials by creating opportunities for productive dialogue. Your efforts will pay off as we approach the 2015 General Assembly session. We encourage you to continue these discussion so that educational and political leaders can work together to ensure that we provide the best possible education for our students.

Do you have other advocacy activities to share? If so, contact Emily Webb, coordinator of government relations, at [emily@vsba.org](mailto:emily@vsba.org) or 434-295-8722.



# UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

**December 16 – 18, 2014 from 12:30 – 1:30 pm**

**Webinar: Budget & Finance 101 3-Part Series**

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

DETAIL: During session one, Virginia public school budgeting will be discussed, including roles of elected officials, fiduciary requirements, stakeholders, and budget reports. Session two 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 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**

**Webinar: FOIA—Excessive Burden or Essential to Democracy?**

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

DETAIL: 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.

**January 26-27, 2015 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 greetings from Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe and commentary on the “big picture” political scene with Dr. Bob Holsworth. Attendees will receive an overview of the governor’s budget amendments and VSBA’s legislative priorities, and the end of the day will feature a reception that will provide an opportunity to mix and mingle with your legislators and top administration officials. Jump start day two with Dr. Steve Staples, superintendent of public instruction, before walking to the Capitol for personal visits with your legislators.



**January 27, 2015 VSBA Orientation for New Board Members & Superintendents**

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott

DETAIL: Becoming a new school board member or superintendent is an honor and a privilege. Enjoy a successful and less stressful transition by attending this orientation. Many important topics will be covered, including ethics, school law, parliamentary procedure, board/superintendent roles, teamwork, and more. Don’t miss this popular event, which is a “must” for new board members and superintendents.



**January 27, 2015 VSBA Orientation for New Chairmen & Vice-Chairmen**

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott

DETAIL: Have you recently been selected as your school board’s new chairman or vice-chairman? If so, don’t miss this orientation, which has been especially designed to help you become more comfortable with your new role and responsibilities. Experts in a variety of areas will address many important topics, such as the legal authority of the chairman, parliamentary procedure, optimizing the chair/superintendent relationship, and ethical considerations as a board chair.



*Continued from page 1*

advocate and support all efforts of VSBA and the advancement of student achievement.

**What are the biggest challenges facing school boards and VSBA in the year ahead?**

There are several challenges facing VSBA and school boards across this great Commonwealth, but I believe the primary concerns are:

- State and Federal Unfunded Mandates
- Schools in Challenging Environments
- Teaching all Students 21st Century Learning Skills

I will work with the VSBA staff and board, local school boards,

and legislators to address these challenges.

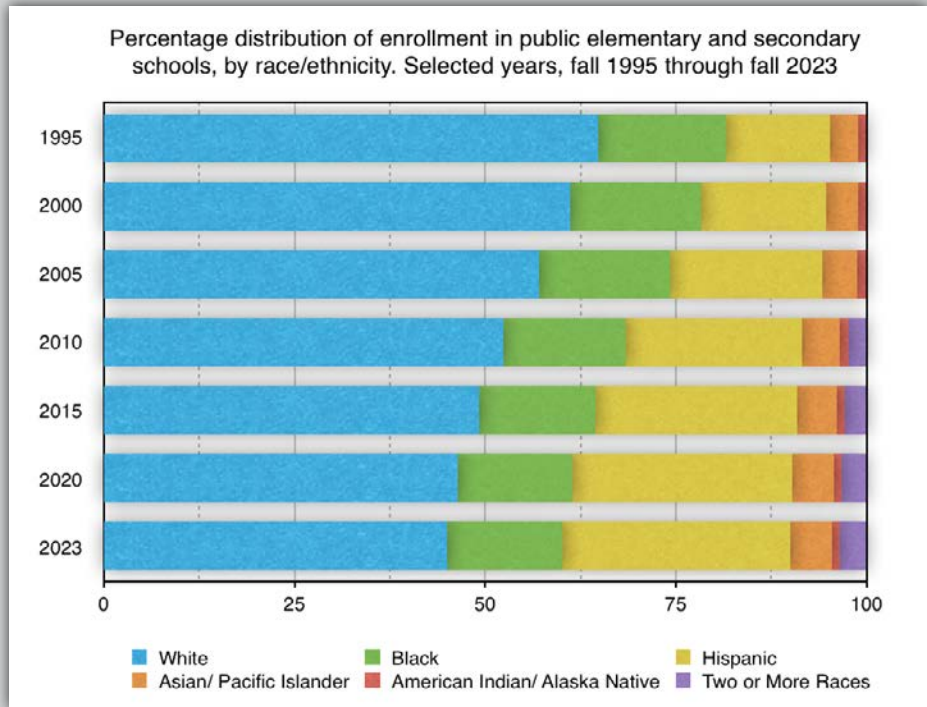
**What is your vision for VSBA's role in the process for improving education in Virginia?**

I envision the VSBA being at the table anytime public education is being discussed by decision makers in Richmond or at local cities, towns and counties. The VSBA represents every school board in the Commonwealth. The VSBA members have the knowledge and passion to speak on public education as we are on the front line. As president of VSBA, I pledge to give VSBA a voice at the table when public education is being discussed. I will work closely with Gina and the VSBA staff to prepare myself to express the desires of the membership.



### White students to no longer be majority in U.S. public schools

This year is the first time American public schools enroll more minority students than non-Hispanic white students, according to projections from the National center for Education Statistics (NCES). At 49.8%, non-Hispanic whites still are projected to be the largest racial group in public schools, but will no longer make up the majority. Last school year, that group comprised 50.4% of students. NCES estimates that this year, about 25% of students will be Hispanic, 15% black and 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, with the rest of the minority enrollment made up of multiple-race students and Native Americans. To view an Excel spreadsheet of the NCES projections, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/xls/tabn203.50.xls>



### 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 and/or encouragement 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 awards 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 16, 2015. Letters and certificates will be mailed to recommended employers in February (School Board Appreciation Month).

Questions? Contact Peter Sengenberger, assistant executive director, at [peter@vsba.org](mailto:peter@vsba.org) or 434-295-8722



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## 7 Architectural Projects Earn State Awards

Six architects and seven schools were recognized in the 2014 Virginia School Boards Association's Exhibition of School Architecture. Winning projects were selected from 18 entries submitted by 11 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: Spectrum Design, PC  
PROJECT: Cave Spring Middle School  
DIVISION: Roanoke County Public Schools

AWARD: Gold Design Award  
FIRM: VMDO Architects  
PROJECT: Fauquier High School  
DIVISION: Fauquier County Public Schools

AWARD: Gold Design Award  
FIRM: BCWH  
PROJECT: Chesterfield Career and Technical Center at Hull  
DIVISION: Chesterfield County Public Schools

AWARD: Gold Design Award  
FIRM: BCWH  
PROJECT: Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School  
DIVISION: Richmond City Public Schools

AWARD: Silver Design Award  
FIRM: Ballou Justice Upton Architects  
PROJECT: Essex High School  
DIVISION: Essex County Public Schools

AWARD: Silver Design Award  
FIRM: HBA Architecture & Interior Design, Inc.  
PROJECT: Kellam High School  
DIVISION: Virginia Beach City Public Schools

AWARD: Silver Design Award  
FIRM: Moseley Architects  
PROJECT: Charlottesville High School STEM Lab  
DIVISION: Charlottesville City Public Schools



## Isle of Wight County and Manassas City School Boards Designated as VSBA Boards of Distinction

Congratulations Isle of Wight County School Board and Manassas City School Board for each being designated as a VSBA Board of Distinction. Boards receiving this award must apply for it and meet specific requirements in four key areas: planning, policy, promotion, and board development. A panel of judges reviews the criteria submitted and determines those awarded the VSBA Board of Distinction status.

### Ask the Legal Expert

**Q.** Can our school board hold its organizational meeting in December?

**A.** No. Virginia law specifies that school boards can hold their organizational meetings, at which the board's meeting schedule is established and at which the chair, vice chair, clerk and deputy clerk are chosen, in either July or January. Although some boards would like to hold the organizational meeting early (in June or December), the law does not permit this.





George Reid receiving award from VSBA Past President Kerri Wilson at the VSBA Annual Convention

### Cumberland County School Board Member George J. Reid, Jr. Receives VSBA All Virginia School Board Award

George J. Reid, Jr., a member of the Cumberland County School Board since 1993, received the 2014 VSBA All Virginia School Board Award. This award recognizes school board members for the boardsmanship qualities, and this is the 13th year the award has been presented. While on the board, George has been both chairman and vice-chairman and has functioned in various other capacities, including board representative for the Governor’s School and voting delegate for the VSBA Delegate Assembly. He once tried to retire from the board, but was so highly regarded that his constituents went to the polls and elected him as a write-in candidate. With his strong sense of duty, he accepted the office and continued to serve.

### Three Student School Board Representatives Awarded VSBA Exhibitors Scholarships

Three Virginia seniors were awarded 2014 VSBA Exhibitors Scholarships. The scholarships, funded by exhibiting companies at the VSBA’s annual convention, were made available to spring 2015 graduating seniors who had served as student school board representatives. Apollo Education Group/ University of Phoenix, Carter Machinery Company, M.B. Kahn Construction Company, Metz Culinary Management, and Vanir Construction Management sponsored this year’s scholarships.

#### Matt Austin

Goochland High School  
Goochland County Public Schools

#### Lindsey Ball

Windsor High School  
Isle of Wight County Public Schools

#### Kayla Brown

Virginia High School  
Bristol City Public Schools

### 2014 VSBA High School Student Video Contest Winners Announced

The VSBA’s third annual student video contest challenged high school students across Virginia to create a 30-second video around the theme of “Virginia, we are one.” The first, second and third place winners, selected out of 59 submissions, were announced at the opening general session of the VSBA Annual Convention.



CLICK TO VIEW

- **1st Place:** Gus Hebner, David Thorp, Ethan Bowman, Andre Juste, Christain Porter, and Rudy Henriquez (Arlington Career Center, Arlington County Public Schools) <http://bit.ly/11TWwnP>
- **2nd Place:** Rowan Miller, Antonio Rose, and Danielle Cross (Kettle Run High School, Fauquier County Public Schools) <http://bit.ly/11TWZWZ>
- **3rd Place:** Emily Anderson, Dontae Mauck, Ivy Nargiz, Hazer Pastora, Matt Petitta, KeSean Robinson, Haley Swartz, and Max Thompson (John Handley High School, Winchester City Public Schools) <http://bit.ly/1vjBbLq>





### Meet the 2014-2015 VSBA Board of Directors



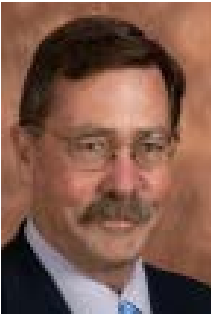
**Wade**



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Gina G. Patterson, executive director

Peter J. Sengenberger, assistant executive director



**Foster**



**Larson**



**Ramsey**



# VSBA

## Virginia School Boards Association

Rivanna Ridge Professional Building • 200 Hansen Road, Suite 2 • Charlottesville, VA 22911

**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**  
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