



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

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

**VASS Executive Director
Guest Article**
Page 3

Student Art Contest Winners
Page 4

Annual Convention 2015
Page 7

Free BoardDocs Webinar
Page 8

DATES TO REMEMBER

JULY 15
Superintendent Evaluation
Workshop

JULY 20
New Chairman/Board Member/
Superintendent Orientation

JULY 21
Conference on Education

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer is finally here!! We have had a year of SOL testing, spring concerts, field trips, budgets, and sometimes long board meetings. It is now time to relax our minds and bodies and rehab many of our school buildings.

As school board members we are in constant learning mode and VSBA provides plenty of opportunities for us to increase our knowledge. There are two opportunities that I would like to share with you.

On July 20, 2015, there will be training for new school board members, new chairs/vice chairs, and new superintendents. Presenters will inform participants on topics such as the ethics, school law, parliamentary procedure, budgets, communications, board/superintendent roles and responsibilities, teamwork, and more.

Additionally, on July 21, 2015, hundreds of school division leaders from across Virginia will gather at the 30th annual VSBA Conference on Education. You will have the opportunity to choose from over forty mini-workshops highlighting successful practices in Virginia's school divisions. Topics will range from STEM to social media, and career readiness to curriculum. There will also be an opportunity for you to meet with your region to discuss relevant issues.

Be sure to register for these conferences. Information can be found on the VSBA website.

You may have some free time this summer, whether you are going to the beach, mountains, or a "staycation". I have a few good books to recommend for your summer reading pleasure.

- *Boys Into Men* by Nancy Boyd-Franklin and A.J. Franklin
- *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders, and the "Letters from Birmingham Jail"* by S. Jonathan Bass
- *Great By Choice* by Jim Collins
- *The Smartest Kids In The World and How They Got That Way* by Amanda Ripley
- *The Secret of TSL (Total Student Load): The Revolutionary Discovery That Raises School Performance* by William Ouchi

I will finally get around to reading *Ten Men You Meet in the Huddle* by Bill Curry. As you may recall, Bill Curry gave a popular and passionate presentation at the 2014 Annual Convention.

My fellow board members, the work that we do is vital to our communities and the nation. It can be very stressing on our minds and body. Take time to relax and prepare for the upcoming year.

Have a safe summer.



VSBA SCHOOL LAW CONFERENCE - More than 250 school board members, superintendents, and school division attorneys from across the Commonwealth learned about a variety of important topics, including reasons why the Federal Office of Civil Rights (OCR) investigates public school divisions, the latest trends in OCR compliance reviews, information on the Freedom of Information Act, and an update on how the 2015 General Assembly session will impact local school divisions.



Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

How to best acclimate new school board members in your division

School board service is very difficult work, so it is important that new board members have sufficient support. Each year, the VSBA holds two orientations for new school board members and superintendents, one in January after the November elections and one in July after the May elections/appointments. These orientations cover important topics such as school board ethics, school law, parliamentary procedure, budgets, board/superintendent roles, teamwork, and more.

In addition to the VSBA orientation, it is essential to orient new members to the workings of your particular division; this is to the benefit of the entire school board. While attending the recent NSBA Annual Conference in Nashville, I attended a session led by a board from Connecticut that presented on a customized handbook the division developed that included “must have” information for new board members. A handbook that can be easily updated and distributed is a good way to start.

Each local board must decide how to orient its new members. To get you started, NSBA developed a list of recommendations, and we have since added to that list below, on how to best orient new members.

“It is essential to orient new members to the workings of your particular division.”

- A copy of the division’s vision, mission, goals, and strategic plan
- Access to a current copy of the division’s policies and regulations
- Access to prior board meeting minutes or recordings
- School board and division organizational chart
- Basic parliamentary procedures for conducting local board meetings
- Explanation of how agendas are developed
- The role of the school board chair/vice-chair
- The role of the school board clerk
- An explanation of how the chain of communication works in the division
- Procedure for responding to the media and citizens
- A copy of the division’s most current annual report
- A copy of the Virginia Standards of Quality and Accreditation
- Definition of FOIA (VSBA will provide access to the FOIA manual to all new members)
- A copy of the division’s budget and a time to meet with the head of the finance department to explain Virginia school finance law (VSBA will provide access to our finance manual to all new members)
- How much the division currently spends per pupil
- Current enrollment trends in the division
- An explanation of the Virginia SOLs and regulations
- Status of all the schools in the division, if they are making AYP, and recent test results
- Division dropout rate and college-bound rate
- Teacher/pupil ratio and class size
- Information on the division’s special education programs
- Information on the division’s gifted programs
- The division’s technology plan
- Access to a school email address for school board business
- Job description for the superintendent and top administrators in the division
- An explanation of the division’s employee evaluation criteria and procedures
- An explanation of the division’s staff development program
- A list showing information on schools and other buildings
- A tour of the division’s facilities
- Information on any construction projects currently going on in the division
- Division boundaries and attendance zones
- A calendar of VSBA activities and other board development activities
- Policies and procedures overview by the school board attorney
- A mentor for new members (VSBA is happy to assist with providing a mentor)

Keep in mind that all information cannot be covered at one time, nor should it all be covered at once. Use this list as a starting point to identify the needs and priorities for orienting your school board’s new members. Remember, the VSBA is here to assist any way we can to help make the transition as smooth as possible.



A Message from the VASS Executive Director



Dr. Ben Kiser
Executive Director
Virginia Association of School Superintendents

I heard someone say recently, “It is a good time to be in Virginia.” I must say that I agreed with this individual. The climate is right for school board members, policymakers, educators, and business partners to share expertise and experience on critical issues in order to improve public education in Virginia. Together the delivery of academic content can be improved, appropriate measures of student performance can be clarified, and an appropriate accountability system can be designed that recognizes schools and districts for success but at the same time highlights areas that need attention.

While good work is being accomplished by groups such as the Governor’s Innovation Committee and the State Board of Education, there is much work to be done by the Virginia General Assembly in appropriately funding public education. Since 2008-09, school boards and superintendents have been challenged to maintain quality educational programs due to declining state funding for public education.

As Virginia prepares to have all 140 seats in the General Assembly on the ballot in November, school boards, superintendents, and other stakeholders need to ask all candidates how they plan to reinvest in public education. Virginia’ future hinges on a strong public education system that is adequately funded by the General Assembly, and not on the backs of local governing bodies struggling with real estate and personal property taxes to compensate for Virginia’s lack of commitment.

In January 2015, 100 of the 132 school boards throughout Virginia adopted resolutions stating that Virginia needs to appropriately fund its share of public education. School boards and superintendents know all too well the

challenges they have faced since 2008-09. The Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS) opted this spring to conduct its own survey to clarify the challenges school boards have faced.

111 school divisions have experienced a decline in state funding per pupil by an average of 593 dollars. During the same time frame 52 school divisions experienced a loss in local revenue by an average of 1,503 dollars. The net effect is that school divisions have had much less revenue to support continued increases in expectations and state mandates.

The VASS survey inquired of specific strategies that have been implemented to accommodate such reductions in revenue. Those strategies included the reduction of 3,785 teachers, 232 school-based administrators, 3,701 support positions, and 283 administrators, totaling over 8,000 positions cut. In addition elementary class sizes are over 25, middle school class sizes are over 28, and high school class sizes are over 29. 51% of the school divisions have eliminated over 209 curricular programs, including over 88 career-technical education programs. Last but certainly, not least, of the 112 school divisions that responded to the survey, 43 schools have been closed, including 30 elementary schools.

Seventy seven percent of the school divisions that responded believe teachers have left their school divisions due to salaries. The above data are real numbers as a result of six years of declining state revenue for public education. We have an opportunity to influence a better way as we consider 140 seats in the General Assembly and the subsequent biennium budget that will be approved during its next session. Virginia can and must do better for its children, its future.

“Virginia’ future hinges on a strong public education system that is adequately funded...”



We are better together

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Congratulations 2015 VSBA Student Art Contest Winners!

Blue Ridge

Rachel Penley – Bland Elementary School (Bland County)

Crista Johnson – Clifton Middle School (Alleghany County)

Katie Boggs – Alleghany High School (Alleghany County)

Central

Abby Heffer – Locust Grove Elementary School (Orange County)

Jase Lopez – Louisa Middle School (Louisa County)

Laura Morris – Albemarle High School (Albemarle County)

Eastern

Mia Jia Hui Ware – West Point Elementary (West Point)

Zenyo Aksit – King George Middle School (King George County)

Cameron Pelletier – King George High School (King George County)

Northeastern

Dylan Buckler – Ashburn Elementary School (Loudoun County)

Sharon Park – Ormond Stone Middle School (Fairfax County)

Yesenia De La Cruz – Chancellor High School (Spotsylvania County)

Southern

Angel Collins – Linkhorne Elementary School (Lynchburg City)

Emily Worsham – Dan River Middle School (Pittsylvania County)

Kelsey Edwards – Tunstall High School (Pittsylvania County)

Southside

Elda Blanco – Bellwood Elementary School (Chesterfield County)

Tre Totten – Oak Knoll Middle School (Hanover County)

Gracyn Gigante – Henrico High School (Henrico County)

Southwest

Gracen Evans – St Paul Elementary School (Wise County)

Shayela Harman – Richlands Middle School (Tazewell County)

Shannon Lamie – Patrick Henry High School (Washington County)

Tidewater

Andrew Fiocca, Ariq Huq, and Montaye Poole – Mount Vernon Elementary School (York County)

Shalaria Robinson – Luther Porter Jackson Middle School (Surry County)

Winters Angeles – Ocean Lakes High School (Virginia Beach City)

Valley

Luke Hooker – Valley Elementary School (Bath County)

Alexis Marie Halterman – Signal Knob Middle School (Shenandoah County)

Sarah Deane Carlton – John Handley High School (Winchester City)

2015 Business Honor Roll – ADDITION!

Local businesses have the power to shape community attitudes about public schools, and the VSBA Business Honor Roll is a way for school boards to recognize local businesses for their support.

Cumberland County Public Schools

Wingo's Convenience Store



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UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

July 15, 2015

Superintendent Evaluation Workshop

LOCATION: VSBA Offices, Charlottesville

DETAIL: What are the requirements? What is the difference between standards and indicators, and how will they be measured? Who establishes the cut scores for performance ratings? This workshop is designed to provide small group support to superintendents and board members responsible for updating their evaluation model. Participants will have the opportunity to review the guidelines in detail and then use them as they draft or update their own models.

July 20, 2015

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 the VSBA Orientation for New Board Members & Superintendents. Many important topics will be covered, including ethics, school law, parliamentary procedure, board/superintendent roles, teamwork, and more. Don't miss this popular event, now with extended sessions, which is a "must" for all new board members and superintendents!

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

July 20, 2015

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 the VSBA Orientation for New Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen, 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. You will also have the opportunity to network with other new chairmen and vice-chairmen from across Virginia.

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July 21, 2015

Conference on Education

LOCATION: Richmond Marriott

DETAIL: Join hundreds of school division leaders from across Virginia at the 30th annual VSBA Conference on Education at the Grand Ballroom of the Richmond Marriott. Attendees will have the opportunity to choose from over forty mini-workshops highlighting successful practices in Virginia's school divisions. Topics will range from STEM to social media, and career readiness to curriculum; participants are bound to leave with many great insights and practical ideas. After the roundtable presentations, attendees will break into regional meetings to discuss pertinent issues coming up for their particular regions. A luncheon and featured speaker will close out the day.

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The Time for Advocacy is NOW!

Emily V. Webb, VSBA Government Relations Coordinator

I know that summer is slowly heating up and it feels like the General Assembly just completed their work for this year, but the time for advocacy is now! You have heard me talk about the importance of advocacy since last spring. Advocacy is informational and educational. It creates awareness and encourages crucial conversations about important topics that directly impact the community. It is imperative for board members to engage all stakeholders to ensure we have the resources, programs, and technology to successfully develop and educate the students of the 21st Century.

Just last week there were several primary elections across the state. We saw a few incumbents lose their elections, and a lot of fresh new faces win their primary. And now that the primary elections are over, all 140 seats of the General Assembly are up for election in November. The time is now to ask candidates the tough questions and engage them in a thoughtful conversation about the importance of a strong, vibrant public education system. I encourage all of you to reach out to those candidates running for the House of Delegates and Senate of Virginia. Ask them questions like:

- Where do they stand on public education?
- What are their education priorities?
- How can they help us continue to innovate in our classrooms and develop the future leaders of our commonwealth?

Also, invite them to visit the schools in your division or attend an upcoming school board meeting. Try to help them understand the challenges your division faces and the outstanding work that your teachers, students, and staff are doing each and every day. Remember that this personal interaction is key to developing and continuing strong relationships with policy makers.

Here are a few additional tips for successful advocacy meetings.

- Time is always limited during these meetings. Be prepared by knowing the issues you want to discuss and questions you want to ask. If you don't know an answer to one of their questions, be honest and follow-up with the answer after your meeting.
- Be a resource. Elected officials and policy makers often rely on information from their constituents to educate them and make the right decisions. Offer to serve as a resource to them throughout their time in public office.
- Make a clear, actionable request. Many people are afraid that it's impolite to make a direct request. But, don't forget that the purpose of your meeting is to secure support for your issues. It is appropriate and expected that you will make a request at your meeting. The key is to make sure that your request is clearly articulated and actionable.

Thank you for your interest and support of VSBA's advocacy efforts. We ask that you continue to share your successful advocacy activities. As always, please contact Emily Webb, VSBA coordinator of government relations, at emily@vsba.org if there is anything we can do to better assist you and your school board in your advocacy efforts.

Ask the Legal Expert

Q. Who administers the oath of office to school board members?

A. The oath of office may be administered to school board members by the clerk of the circuit court or by any judge.

COMMUNICATIONS TIP

As you encounter teachers over the summer and the beginning of the next school year, don't ask them about their SOL scores, their lesson plans, or what they plan to do differently in the classroom next year. Focus on the positives and what drives their motivation with questions like:

- What was the most rewarding experience you had this year?
- What made you decide to become a teacher?
- What is your favorite part of teaching?

Remember, schools divisions are often one of (if not "the") largest employers in a community, and your teachers are the experts and voice of the school division to many of their friends, family members, and neighbors. Asking them these types of questions will help keep them focused on the positive aspects of their career, not the parts that are the most frustrating, and will hopefully encourage them to share these positive thoughts with those around them.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

VSBA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2015

General Session Speakers:

DATE:

November 18 – 20, 2015

LOCATION:

Williamsburg Lodge
Williamsburg, VA

Call for Presentations:



to complete the SurveyMonkey form to be considered for a one-hour convention presentation. If selected, VSBA staff will be in touch with the assigned presentation time.

Deadline: August 14, 2015



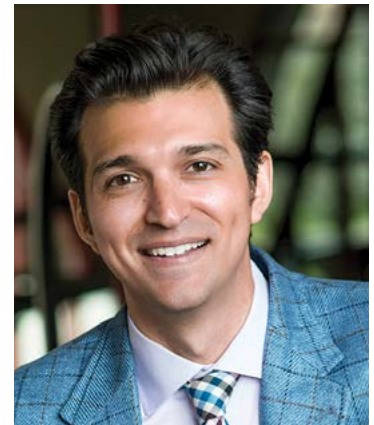
Gen. Stewart Rodeheaver (Ret.)

Stewart Rodeheaver is a proven combat, corporate and community leader, and entrepreneur. He is the owner of ViziTech, a break-away technology company focused in 3D, virtual, interactive and augmented reality based training. ViziTech was Georgia's "Coolest Technology Company" of the year in 2011 and Stewart was the technology "Entrepreneur of the Year" as chosen by the Technology Association of Georgia. BG Rodeheaver served the U.S. Army for 38 years.



Jaclyn Marie Roller Ryan

Jaclyn Marie Roller Ryan, an agriscience teacher and Future Farmers of America (FFA) advisor at Signal Knob Middle School in Shenandoah County Public Schools, is the Region 4 Virginia Teacher of the Year and the 2015 Virginia Teacher of the Year. A recipient of numerous honors, Jaclyn is the third generation in her family to be an agriscience teacher and FFA advisor in her hometown.



Rory Vaden, MBA

Rory Vaden: Cofounder of Southwestern Consulting™, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Take the Stairs* and *Procrastinate On Purpose*, international speaker, and the world's leading expert on self-discipline and overcoming procrastination. Rory's newest book is called *Procrastinate on Purpose: 5 Permissions to Multiply Your Time* and became an instant national bestseller.

Moderators Needed:

Breakout session moderators introduce presenters and serve as liaisons between the audience and speakers. Contact Brianna Stout, coordinator of board development, at brianna@vsba.org to sign up today!

For regularly updated information, visit the Annual Convention page of the VSBA web site [HERE](#)

Thank you to the VSBA Annual Convention Event-Level Sponsors

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VSBA CLERKS CONFERENCE – School board clerks from across the Commonwealth came together in Charlottesville for a day of professional development and training.

FREE Webinar!

**VSBA BoardDocs—
Save Money. Save Time. Be More Effective.**

DATE: Tuesday, August 25, 2015

TIME: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

BoardDocs is the exclusive eGovernance partner of VSBA. Join VSBA for the free informational webinar demonstration. The webinar will showcase BoardDocs' cloud-based solutions and demonstrate why it is the eGovernance leader, not only in Virginia, but across the nation. Participants will learn how to save money, time and be more effective with BoardDocs.

Presenter: Laura Vautour, BoardDocs

Cost: FREE

REGISTER TODAY!

After registering you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the webinar. For information, contact Brianna Stout, coordinator of board development, at brianna@vsba.org.

Over Half of Virginia School Divisions use BoardDocs!

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School Board Recognition Programs

VSBA Board of Distinction

Each year, the VSBA identifies school boards that will be designated as a VSBA Board of Distinction. Boards must apply for the designation and must meet specific requirements in four key areas: planning, policy, promotion, and board development. If eligible, the board will receive a plaque to hang on the wall of their boardroom designating the board as a VSBA Board of Distinction.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

VSBA School Board of the Year

Each year, one outstanding local school board is named the VSBA School Board of the Year to recognize its efforts. Nominated school boards must be members of VSBA at the time of nomination and selection.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

VSBA Regional School Board Member of the Year*

Each year, the VSBA recognizes one outstanding school board member from each of the nine VSBA regions who exemplifies local involvement in promoting student achievement. *Previously named the VSBA All Virginia School Board.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

VSBA Advocate for Education Award – NEW!

To celebrate our member’s year-round advocacy efforts, VSBA is pleased to announce the creation of the VSBA Advocate for Education award. This award was created to recognize board members who have demonstrated significant and outstanding leadership, commitment, and contribution to public education in their region and the Commonwealth, and who have shown active involvement in local, state, and federal advocacy on behalf of their division, VSBA, and public education.

For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

2014-2015 VSBA Board of Directors

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Tidewater

Ruth M. Larson
Williamsburg/James City County

Valley

Ron Ramsey
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Gina G. Patterson, executive director

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assistant executive director



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.