



**VSBA President  
Bill Kidd  
Wythe County School Board**

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

**March 10**  
Webinar

**March 16**  
VSBA/WVSBA Hot Topic Conference

**April 9-11**  
NSBA Annual Conference

**April 26**  
Hot Topic Conference

**April 28**  
School Board Clerks Conference

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Greetings from Southwest Virginia!

In March 2015, the VSBA Board of Directors approved the creation of the VSBA Task Force on Workforce Readiness. Dr. Tom Brewster, superintendent of Pulaski County Schools, and I are the co-chairs of this group that is comprised of board members, superintendents, and significant stakeholders from across the Commonwealth. We were fortunate early on to acquire active partnership and participation from the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Association of School Superintendents, Virginia Community College System, Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Virginia PTA, REL Appalachia, and Virginia Association of Career and Technical Education. The mission established by the task force is *"to support school divisions by identifying and promoting workforce readiness opportunities that enable students to be prepared to succeed in the new economy."* We began by spending much time in discussions that identified both strengths and challenges that we see in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across the state. From there the task force developed a statewide survey to allow school division superintendents a chance to share their input in relation to the CTE programs in their divisions. These surveys went out last October and November and the results have now been [collected and tabulated](#). Responses were received from 115 of the 132 surveys that were sent out.

On January 18, I took part in the VSBA Task Force Day on the Hill and we presented an overview of our work to date and shared key findings from the survey to the House Committee on Education. Following are some key findings from the survey:

- Increased funding is needed to sustain current programs, develop new programs, update equipment and resources, and obtain and retain the highest quality instructors.
- There is a need for greater collaboration between business and industry, the community college system, and the core school setting.
- The impact of scheduling and graduation requirements and SOL demands significantly affects a student's availability to be enrolled in CTE programs.

- It is important to explore virtual learning and distance learning options in order to expand workforce training opportunities throughout the Commonwealth.
- There is a need to more adequately align courses taught with job opportunities that are available.
- The need for earlier introduction of career education and options for both students and parents is crucial.
- The need to enhance the integration of essential employment skills or soft skills and ethics throughout our K-12 classrooms is vital.

Our presentation was very well received and much good interaction ensued with questions and favorable comments from several House Committee members.

The work of this task force is ongoing and the Board of Directors will be determining in the near future what directions in which to proceed from here.



**Bill Kidd, Dr. Greg Smith, and Dr. Tom Brewster meeting with Senator Bill Carrico to discuss the Workforce Readiness Task Force survey results.**

On March 16, in Wytheville, Virginia, VSBA will be presenting a Hot Topic conference centered around the topic of CTE/Workforce Readiness. For the second year we will also be partnering with the West Virginia School Board Association in this venture. If you haven't already done so, [please register to attend](#) this very timely conference.

The General Assembly is currently in session. This affords school board members a unique opportunity to exercise one of our most important missions as  
*(continued on page 3)*



**Gina G. Patterson**  
VSBA Executive Director

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Why annual school board self-evaluations matter

Doesn't it make sense that members of a school board that support and encourage a continuous improvement model in schools would take the time to reflect on their own practices? Even though there is no legal obligation for the school board to evaluate itself, effective boards recognize the value of an annual school board self-evaluation. Effective boards engage in a continuing process of self-assessment, and use the results to identify opportunities for improvement.

School board self-evaluation provides more than just accountability and communication. It provides an opportunity for building the best possible leadership for the division and community. Commitment to quality, excellence, continuous learning, and local control of the educational system is demonstrated when boards lead by example, and a board self-evaluation provides valuable information, discussion and communication.

Self-evaluation by the board:

- ☐ Holds the board accountable to themselves, the staff and the community.
- ☐ Allows for reflection by board members on their individual and collective behavior and performance.
- ☐ Fosters open communication.
- ☐ Improves decision making by enhancing a common understanding of philosophies and goals.
- ☐ Resolves differences of opinion and challenges assumptions.
- ☐ Provides insight into how and why decisions are reached.
- ☐ Allows new board members an opportunity to understand board processes.
- ☐ Identifies strengths and weaknesses of individual board member performance and that of the board as a whole.
- ☐ Holds the board accountable in its role as representative of the public.
- ☐ Provides a starting point for effective goal setting and long range planning.

For more information about the VSBA's facilitated board self-evaluation process, contact Brianna Hundley, coordinator of board development, at [brianna@vsba.org](mailto:brianna@vsba.org).

## YOU'RE INVITED!

### VSBA Breakfast at the NSBA Convention

**Where:** Westin  
Boston Waterfront

**Cost: FREE**—thanks to a generous donation by VMDO Architects

VMDO ARCHITECTS

**Speaker:** John Tuttle, NSBA president

You must preregister to attend. Call VSBA for information at 800-446-8722 or e-mail Brianna Hundley at [brianna@vsba.org](mailto:brianna@vsba.org)

[REGISTER ONLINE](#)

## 2016 NSBA Annual Conference

It's time to register for the 2016 NSBA Annual Conference, set for April 9-11 in Boston, MA. This event will feature valuable insights and learning experiences for education leaders. Keynote speakers include former CBS news anchor Dan Rather; ABC's "Good Morning America" co-anchor Robin Roberts; and Tony Wagner, expert in residence at Harvard University's new Innovation Lab. Registration housing and program information can be found at [www.nsba.org/conference](http://www.nsba.org/conference). VSBA will host the annual "Virginia Breakfast" at the Conference on April 9<sup>th</sup> thanks to a generous donation from VMDO Architects (see more information on the left).



## FOLLOW VSBA ON SOCIAL MEDIA





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *(continued from page 1)*

an organization—that of advocacy. Join in with scores of other board members who are making their voices heard on key issues that will have a lasting impact on education for years to come. We are fortunate to have Emily Webb on staff as government relations coordinator and she does a great job of sending Action Alerts, providing legislative priorities, and keeping us up-to-date on issues as they evolve. Scott Albrecht (Manassas City), who serves on the VSBA Board of Directors as legislative positions/federal relations chairman, is also providing valuable leadership in this venture. Also, Pat Lacy and Stacy Hanley are intrinsic members of our team in their efforts as lobbyists for VSBA. You can receive pertinent information at any time by checking in on the [VSBA blog](#). Advocacy is a year round venture, but it is particularly crucial at this time.

Last month (February) was proclaimed by Governor McAuliffe as School Board Appreciation Month. I would like to extend a belated thank you and congratulations to each of you for all that you do for the children of our Commonwealth. You make a huge difference in the lives of so many young people and you are to be commended for your sacrifice, commitment, and dedication on behalf of our most cherished resource. You are greatly appreciated and we will honor and celebrate you throughout the year!

## Task Force on Workforce Readiness Statewide Survey

In October and November 2015, the task force conducted a statewide survey of public school divisions to gather information on Career & Technical Education across the Commonwealth. A total of 115 of 132 school divisions responded, with balanced statewide representation.

[Click here to download the full report!](#)



## 2016 VSBA Business Honor Roll

Local businesses have the power to shape community attitudes about public schools, and the VSBA Business Honor Roll is a way for local school divisions to recognize local businesses for their support, especially as schools face increasing budget uncertainty. The Business Honor Roll helps divisions say “thank you” for their vital contributions.



Businesses large and small, corporate-owned or family-run, play a key role in supporting our communities and local schools. They contribute to our school divisions in many ways, including helping schools with in-kind or financial contributions, donating to scholarship programs, supporting extracurricular activities, offering internship opportunities, volunteering in the schools, and sponsoring field trips. This type of support is invaluable.

If you are working with a local business that deserves recognition, your division can add up to three names to the VSBA Business Honor Roll by passing a resolution and submitting the nomination form to us by April 1, 2016. [Please click here for complete information, including submission guidelines and the nomination form.](#)

Later this year, VSBA will publish the Business Honor Roll in the association newsletter and issue a news release about those honored through this program. We also will mail personalized recognition certificates and letters of congratulations for each business to division superintendents in time for boards to present to them at May school board meetings.



### Could your board benefit from the insight and direction of a governance expert?

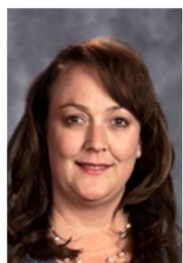
*The VSBA provides one-on-one consulting workshops that can help your team work through common governance topics, such as:*

- ☐ Governance: Leadership Team Roles and Responsibilities
- ☐ New Superintendent: Building a New Governance Team
- ☐ Operations: Establishing Board Norms and Protocols
- ☐ Data: Using Data to Make Informed Decisions
- ☐ Developing & Implementing a Division Communications Program
- ☐ Optimizing Media Relationships to Generate Press Coverage
- ☐ Superintendent Evaluation and Board Self-Evaluation

Contact Brianna Hundley, coordinator of board development, at **434-295-8722** or **brianna@vsba.org** and we will work with your board to design strategies and services that best meet your needs.



## VSBA Profile in Leadership



JULIE BENNINGTON  
Bedford County School Board  
VSBA Southern Region Chairman

Southern Region: Amherst County, Appomattox County, Bedford County, Campbell County, Charlotte County, Danville City, Halifax County, Lynchburg City, Lunenburg County, Mecklenburg County, Pittsylvania County, Prince Edward County

### How long have you been a school board member?

I have been a school board member since May of 2007.

### What/who inspires you?

The kids and teachers in our schools, as well as my daughter.

### What is your motto as a board member?

Do whatever it takes for our kids.

### What is your pie-in-the-sky vision for education?

Unlimited funding and less government involvement in public education.

### What is your advice for new school board members?

Have a very thick skin and make your own informed decisions on items.

### What do you consider your greatest accomplishment as a board member?

Every year when I attend our graduation ceremonies and see the smiles on the kids' faces as they get their diplomas I know I've done a good job.

### What is the primary reason you like being a member of the VSBA?

So I can further my education knowledge to help me be the best school board member that I can be.



### THE VALUE OF MENTORING

Quality mentoring relationships can have a direct impact on your effectiveness as a school board member, both as a mentee who is learning the many aspects of school board service and as a mentor who is reflecting on their experience and looking for ways to continue their learning and growth.

The VSBA has a mentorship program where new school board members are paired with an experienced school board mentor who can answer questions, provide feedback, and offer assistance as needed. Those who have participated in the VSBA mentorship program have reported that this was a very valuable and worthwhile experience.

To participate as a mentor or mentee, contact Brianna Hundley, coordinator of board development, at [brianna@vsba.org](mailto:brianna@vsba.org) or 434-295-8722.

## Miss a webinar?

### No problem!

VSBA webinars are available "on demand" to fit your schedule.

For details, contact Brianna Hundley, coordinator of board development, at [brianna@vsba.org](mailto:brianna@vsba.org) or visit

[http://www.vsba.org/meetings\\_conferences/webinars\\_on\\_demand/](http://www.vsba.org/meetings_conferences/webinars_on_demand/)

## Still comparing apples to oranges?

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## 2016 Capital Conference

Thank you to those members who participated in the VSBA Capital Conference on February 10 and 11. We kicked off the conference with several impactful speakers including Governor Terry McAuliffe, Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones, and Dr. Glenn DuBois, chancellor of the Virginia Community College System. Following those addresses, participants received an informative budget briefing from Jim Regimbal of Fiscal Analytics, an insightful update from Dr. Bob Holsworth on the political landscape for the upcoming presidential election and beyond, and a rundown of legislation before the General Assembly from your VSBA lobbyists. On Thursday, we began the day with important messages from Dr. Billy Cannaday, president of the Virginia Board of Education, and Eddie Oliver, No Kid Hungry Virginia program manager, followed by visits with our state legislators. Many of you shared pictures from your legislative visits where you discussed critical issues like the charter school constitutional amendment, the Parental Choice Education Savings Account legislation, and key budget priorities. Your presence and your advocacy efforts had an impact in Richmond.



## Advocacy in Action

Pamela Sebesky  
(Manassas City) with  
Virginia Secretary of  
Education Anne Holton



Bedford County School Board  
members and Superintendent Doug  
Schuch meet with Senator Steve  
Newman, chairman of the Senate  
Education and Health committee.



Members of the Montgomery  
County School Board meet with  
Delegate Joseph Yost.



VSBA regional chairmen and vice-chairmen watch the  
floor session of the Virginia Senate from the gallery.



Hampton City School Board members  
meet with Senator John Miller.

**A special THANK YOU to all the school boards that passed the resolution opposing the charter school amendment and for all of the school board members who contacted your legislators. Your efforts were successful!**



## VSBA Affiliate Member Profiles

**In each issue of the VSBA newsletter, we will feature three VSBA Affiliate Members.  
Thank you for support of VSBA and Virginia's public education system.**

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#### Hord Coplan Macht, Inc.

Hord Coplan Macht is one of the region's leading school planning and design firms, having performed a wide range of services, ranging from feasibility studies and educational specification development to full design services for projects ranging from small additions and renovations to new high, middle and elementary schools.

Peter Winebrenner, AIA, LEED AP, REFP

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Web: [www.hcm2.com](http://www.hcm2.com)



#### Ameresco

Ameresco, Inc. (NYSE:AMRC) is a leading energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions provider serving North America and the United Kingdom. As a leader in Performance Contracting in Virginia, Ameresco has installed over \$255 million in projects across all markets in the Commonwealth; over 60% have been in K12 public education.

Richard F. Ritter

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Web: [www.ameresco.com](http://www.ameresco.com)



#### Virginia Lottery

At the Virginia Lottery, we're game for education. In addition to supporting Virginians' love of games, our mission is to support K-12 public education. Since 1999, the Virginia Lottery has contributed more than \$7 billion to our public schools. The Virginia Lottery: contributing to Virginia's future one play at a time.

Jennifer Mullen

Phone: 804-692-7770

Email: [jmullen@valottery.com](mailto:jmullen@valottery.com)

Web: [www.valottery.com](http://www.valottery.com)

**Visit [http://www.vsba.org/resources/affiliates/affiliate\\_member\\_program/](http://www.vsba.org/resources/affiliates/affiliate_member_program/) for  
a complete list of VSBA's 50+ Affiliate Members.**

## Ask the Legal Expert

**Q. How often must principals and assistant principals be evaluated?**

**A.** Principals and assistant principals who have achieved continuing contract status must be formally evaluated at least once every three years and informally evaluated at least once each year that they are not formally evaluated. Probationary principals and assistant principals must be evaluated every year.

See previous "Ask the Legal Experts" online at [http://www.vsba.org/services/legal\\_services/ask\\_the\\_experts/](http://www.vsba.org/services/legal_services/ask_the_experts/)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

### March 10, 2016

#### Managing Expectations, Student Accident, Gaps in Coverage

LOCATION: Webinar—FREE!

DETAIL: Is your school division properly managing expectations? Even though school divisions manage their student accident situations differently, it is extremely important that each division acquires the working knowledge of how it desires to manage student accidents across a spectrum of activities. These can include athletics, club activities, PE, field trips, science labs, and many more school related activities. This webinar will allow VACORP to assist school divisions in understanding how to assess their exposure and determine how best to cover that exposure.

### March 16, 2016

#### VSBA/WVSBA Hot Topic Conference

LOCATION: Wytheville Meeting Center

DETAIL: Join the Virginia School Boards Association and the West Virginia School Board Association for the Southwest Hot Topic Conference, which is a result of the efforts of the VSBA Task Force on Workforce Readiness. This conference will focus on Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Workforce Readiness, topics that are important and relevant to every school division regardless of locality. Come hear from CTE directors, community college presidents, guidance counselors, and other key leaders on why we must prepare our students not only for college but also for the workforce when they graduate.

SPONSORED BY:



### April 26, 2016

#### VSBA Hot Topic Conference

LOCATION: Holiday Inn, University Area, Charlottesville, VA

DETAIL: This conference will pull together two hot topic issues from across the Commonwealth. First, attendees will hear from attorneys, education professionals and justice officials on how local divisions can keep students in schools, off the streets, and out of the justice system. In addition, Bedford County Public School representatives (school board member, superintendent, and administrators) will present their story behind the process of integrating personalized learning: where this journey began, how they have implemented this teaching technique, and where their journey will take them in the future.

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**VMDO ARCHITECTS**

### April 28, 2016

#### VSBA School Board Clerks Conference

LOCATION: VSBA Offices, Charlottesville, VA

DETAIL: Join us for the third annual school board clerks stand-alone conference, which is being held at the VSBA offices in Charlottesville. This conference will feature topics of interest to new, as well as seasoned, school board clerks. Topics include the Freedom of Information Act, parliamentary procedure, a legal update, and many more. Attendees will also have the chance to share ideas and best practices that have come out of your work as a school board clerk. We hope that you will join us for what is sure to be an exciting conference.

SPONSORED BY:



## 2016 VSBA Regional Spring Network Forum Schedule

These meetings bring together board members, superintendents, and guests for dinner, networking, keynote speakers, legislative updates, and outstanding student entertainment. The Spring Network Forum features the presentation of the Regional Art Contest Winners. We encourage all to attend their regional meetings. This is a great opportunity to network with other board members in your region and share best practices.

**EASTERN**—March 7, 2016 (Host Division: Richmond County)

**CENTRAL**—March 8, 2016 (Host Division: Culpeper County)

**NORTHEASTERN**—March 9, 2016 (Host Division: Fauquier County)

**TIDEWATER**—April 12, 2016 (Host Division: Virginia Beach City)

**BLUE RIDGE**—April 13, 2016 (Host Division: Pulaski County)

**SOUTHSIDE**—April 14, 2016 (Host Division: Petersburg City)

**VALLEY**—April 18, 2016 (Host Division: Winchester City)

**SOUTHERN**—April 20, 2016 (Host Division: Bedford County)

**SOUTHWEST**—April 21, 2016 (Host Division: Galax City)

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILED BROCHURES  
ON EACH FORUM!](#)



## 2015-2016 VSBA Board of Directors

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William S. Kidd  
Wythe County

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Hanover County

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Charlottesville City

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# 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**

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

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