



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

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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DATES TO REMEMBER

JANUARY
Bullying Prevention Month

JANUARY 21
Superintendent Evaluation Workshop

JANUARY 27-28
Capital Conference

JANUARY 28
New Chair/Member/
Superintendent Orientation

FEBRUARY
School Board Appreciation Month

FEBRUARY 17 - 21
School Board Clerk
Appreciation Week

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First and foremost, I want to congratulate all the newly elected and appointed school board members across the Commonwealth. Thank you for joining the ranks of, what I consider to be, the hardest working, most conscientious, and tireless advocates for public education that exist in today's society. Virginia has a longstanding history of a high quality public education program that is recognized nationally. That continuous quality and high expectation for excellence has been maintained by good governance and leadership at the local school board level. I applaud every board member, new and tenured, past and present, for their commitment to provide all children in the Commonwealth of Virginia with the opportunity to learn, grow and achieve.

Without the foundation of a solid education, a person's options in life can be limited, so removing obstacles and opening pathways is paramount to success, particularly for those who face adversity. Challenges come in many forms, whether it is a child who is new to this country who speaks no English and has had no formal education, a child who has turmoil at home, a child who struggles with one subject, a child who has accelerated academic needs, and everything in between. We must ensure that every student has their educational needs met in order to be productive and contributing members of society. The tasks before every school board seem countless and in continuous flux. That, in and of itself, evokes feelings of admiration and appreciation for each and every one of you.

The benefit of having great diversity throughout Virginia is that we have infinite opportunities to learn and grow from one another. VSBA's mission is to provide school boards and educators with leadership, support, and advocacy opportunities in order for them to best serve the students within their localities. Through a variety of conferences, board development services, policy services, legal services, and more, VSBA is a one-stop resource for school boards, individual school board members, superintendents, and other education stakeholders. My challenge to all of you this year is not only to take full advantage of VSBA and all it has to offer, but

If you are interested in having VSBA President Wilson speak with your teachers and staff, please contact the VSBA office.

also to consider all localities and all school board members as additional resources. No one school division should feel alone in this adventure; we must become united in our efforts to succeed. We can accomplish more together than we can as individuals. Virginia, we are ONE!

I have great expectations for 2014...it is going to be a fantastic year. I am honored to serve as VSBA president and look forward to working with the VSBA Board of Directors on your behalf. Look for members of the board at meetings and conferences, introduce yourselves and tell us how we can best serve you. Throughout the year, I will be hosting a "President's Listening Tour," which will take me to each of the nine VSBA regions. I want to meet you, see your communities, learn of your successes, and hear of your challenges.

At VSBA, we are fortunate to have an amazing cast of leaders at the administrative level. Take a moment to learn who they are and how they can support you: Gina Patterson, executive director; Peter Sengenberger, assistant executive director; Samantha (Staebell) Bosserman, director of membership services; Emily Webb, coordinator of government relations; and Elizabeth Ewing, staff attorney and director of legal and policy services. In addition, there are many others who assist with VSBA's daily responsibilities. Please do not hesitate to contact VSBA should you have any questions, concerns, thoughts or ideas on how we can best serve you.

Happy New Year!

**Virginia,
we are
ONE!**

Newsletter News

Beginning with this issue, the VSBA newsletter will now be distributed every six weeks, for a total of 9 issues per year.



Gina G. Patterson
VSBA Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome New Board Members!

I want to extend a warm welcome to those of you recently elected or appointed to your local school board for the first time. You are joining nearly 850 other citizens throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia who volunteer their time as members of their local school boards. Serving on a school board is, without question, an investment of time and energy. Most board members agree, however, that the personal satisfaction they gain far outweighs the challenges associated with the job. Thank you for your commitment to this most worthwhile form of community service.

By now, you should have received your new school board member packet we sent you as soon as we received your contact information from your board clerk. If for some reason you have not yet received your information, please call the VSBA office at 800-446-8722 to request a packet.

Whenever new members join the governance team—including the hiring of a new superintendent — it is valuable to go “back to the basics,” in order to help orient the newcomers with board governance processes. To assist boards with this orientation, VSBA developed an “Orientation for New School Board Members.” This conference outlines the “nuts and bolts” work of school

“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.”
—Nelson Mandela

boards in a process designed to facilitate conversations about a school division’s identity, purpose, and the board processes available to fulfill that purpose. The next orientation is scheduled for January 28th at the Richmond Marriott. You can register online at www.vsba.org or by calling the VSBA office.

As a school board member, you are automatically a member of the Virginia School Boards Association. VSBA is your organization. It exists to provide leadership, programs and services to support school boards in your efforts to improve student learning. VSBA offers many resources to help

you and your board be as effective as possible in your governance role. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources as you familiarize yourself with the roles and responsibilities of school board service. Be sure to visit the VSBA website to learn more about your association, and please don’t hesitate to contact us if you need assistance.

Thank you for your commitment



Abby Raphael



Kerri Wilson

VSBA Represented on Governor’s Transition Team

VSBA is proud to report that school board members Abby Raphael (Arlington County Public Schools) and Kerri Wilson (Harrisonburg City Schools) were named to Governor McAuliffe’s transition team on preK-12 education policy.



Emily Webb
Government Relations
Coordinator

Keys to a Successful General Assembly Session

This week marks the start of the 2014 General Assembly and the McAuliffe Administration. There are several new members of the General Assembly, a new Secretary of Education and lots of new Governor's office staff. With all these changes, it's important to have a strong, coordinated message, stay on topic and communicate regularly and effectively with your legislators and elected officials.

The state budget, student assessments, mental health reform, and expansion of tax credits are all hot topics that will be before the General Assembly in the coming weeks. With the wide array of interests and thousands of bills to be voted on in the next 60 days, VSBA needs your assistance and active support to engage the public and our legislators. The VSBA lobbying team are your daily boots on the ground, but legislators want to hear from their local constituents and community leaders. Your voice is extremely valuable to them.

So how do you communicate effectively, create a strong message and stay on topic? Below are a few how-to tips for you to utilize during the General Assembly and throughout the year with your advocacy work.

- Make personal, face-to-face contact with your legislators whenever possible. Don't hesitate to pick-up the phone to have a conversation with them if you can't travel to Richmond. The personal interaction is key to developing and continuing that strong relationship.
- Time is always limited when meeting with your legislators. Be prepared by knowing the issues and having facts to support your position. If you don't know an answer to one of their questions, be honest and follow-up with the answer after your meeting.
- Be sure to know the basic legislative process. Your input about the local impact of legislation can be helpful at any time. However, be sure about when and to whom to lobby. Depending on where the bill is in the legislative process, concentrate your efforts on the appropriate members.
- Legislative aides are an important part of the process. Even when you can't talk directly to a legislator, speaking with their legislative aide is vital. They are most often advising the members on specific bills and preparing them each day for session.
- Don't forget your Red Book. The Red Book is updated every year with room and committee assignments. Many members move offices and committees are reassigned so this will help you get around efficiently while in the General Assembly Building. You can also download the Red Book app for your smart phone by searching "Verizon Virginia Government Directory."
- Remember to call ahead when you will be in town to meet with your legislators. While they are often busy, if you call ahead for an appointment they can make time for their district constituents.

Over the course of the General Assembly session, VSBA will be calling on you for various action items. When we put out a legislative alert, it is necessary to follow up on the call in order to stay connected and involved in the legislative process. Remember to review the "Legislative Alert" e-newsletter, as well as other legislative updates issued by the association to keep abreast of current Richmond activities.

Also, don't forget to keep an eye out for updates on the VSBA legislative blog at <http://vsbalegislativeupdate.blogspot.com/> or our Twitter account VASchoolBoards. We look forward to seeing you at the 2014 **VSBA Capital Conference** on January 27th and 28th in Richmond.

VSBA
**Capital
Conference**
RICHMOND, VA
January 27-28, 2014

WHO ARE YOUR LEGISLATORS?

Visit the Virginia General Assembly web site to identify your local legislators and obtain contact information.

CLICK HERE

<http://conview.state.va.us/whosmy.nsf/vgamain?openform>

VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONVENES ON JANUARY 8, 2014



UPCOMING VSBA EVENTS, WORKSHOPS & TRAINING

January 21, 2014

Superintendent Evaluation Workshop

Location: VSBA Offices, Charlottesville, VA

Detail: Are you prepared to meet the July 1, 2014 implementation date for the revised evaluation model for your superintendent? The deadline is rapidly approaching, and in response to member requests the VSBA is offering one-day workshops that are 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 for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Superintendents in detail and then use them as they draft their own models. Individual consultation and support will be provided throughout the session as participants work on their revisions.

More Info: http://www.vaschoolboards.org/index.php/meetings_conferences/vsba_hot_topic_conference/

January 27 – 28, 2014

Capital Conference (formerly the Legislative Conference)

Location: Richmond Marriott

Detail: The 2014 General Assembly promises to be another challenging session for supporters of public education, due to the difficult fiscal climate and the ever-increasing role and expectations of our public education system. We will start off the day with a session featuring greetings from the new Virginia Secretary of Education (invited) and commentary on the “big picture” political scene by Dr. Bob Holsworth, frequent political analyst for the press and

television. Attendees will receive an overview of the Governor’s budget, and VSBA’s lobbyists will review VSBA’s legislative priorities. The end of the day will feature a “don’t miss” reception that will provide you with an opportunity to mix and mingle with your delegates and senators, and hear remarks by our new Governor (invited). Day 2 involves personal visits with legislators.

More Info: http://www.vaschoolboards.org/index.php/meetings_conferences/legislative_conference/

January 28, 2014

New Chairmen/Board Member/ Superintendent Orientation

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 important event. Many 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!

More Info: http://www.vaschoolboards.org/index.php/meetings_conferences/orientation_for_new_board_members_superintendents_chairmen_and_vice_chairme/

February 21, 2014

Superintendent Evaluation Workshop

See January 21 description for details.

Full. No Availability.

March 10, 2014

Superintendent Evaluation Workshop

See January 21 description for details.

March 26, 2014

Hot Topic Conference

Location: Wytheville Meeting Center

Detail: This conference will pull together three hot topic issues from across the Commonwealth, including Communities In Schools services, mental health services for students, and religious exemptions in Virginia.

More Info: http://www.vaschoolboards.org/index.php/meetings_conferences/vsba_hot_topic_conference/

Please contact Samantha S. Bosserman, director of membership services, at samantha@vsba.org with any questions about these opportunities.

Making a Difference Through Design

SHW Group is proud of the work we do with our clients in Northern Virginia, Central Virginia, Hampton Roads, the Valley, and beyond. Stay tuned for future installments highlighting their excellent projects! Will your district be next?

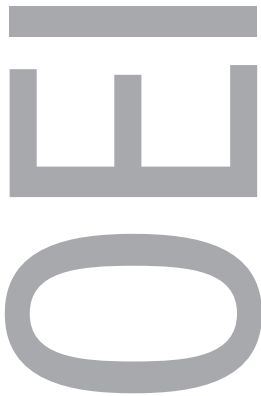


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OEI RECAP & LITIGATION UPDATE



The Opportunity Educational Institution (OEI) and the OEI Board were created by the General Assembly in its 2013 session to take over the supervision of schools that were denied accreditation and to require documentation and information about schools that had been accredited with warning for three years. The legislation also grants the OEI Board the authority to vote to take over the supervision of any school accredited with warning for three years. The legislation creating the OEI and the OEI Board purported to make the OEI “a statewide school division” and the OEI Board “a policy board in the executive branch of state government.”

The school board of a school that is taken over must transfer to OEI not only the local funds required by the state-mandated Standards of Quality, but also any local funds appropriated to the school division of residence in excess of the state-mandated amount. (At present, every school board receives funds in excess of the minimum required by state law.) It is clear that the state does not intend to appropriate any new money to fund its takeover of these schools.

VSBA and the Norfolk City School Board filed an action in Norfolk Circuit Court on September 13, 2013, challenging OEI and the OEI Board on primarily two grounds. First, the lawsuit contends that the legislation violates Article VIII, § 7, of the Constitution of Virginia, which provides that the “supervision of schools in each school division shall be vested in a school board.” Second, the lawsuit contends that the legislation violates Article VIII, § 5(a), which vests the authority in the Board of Education to create school divisions.

Judge Charles E. Poston was appointed to hear the case, and in mid-October the OEI and OEI Board filed a demurrer (motion to dismiss) challenging the standing of VSBA to file the lawsuit. However, it did not challenge the authority of the Norfolk City School Board to do so. On December 19, 2013, VSBA and Norfolk filed a motion seeking summary judgment in our favor. VSBA members will continue to be updated as the case progresses.

Number of Divisions Passing OEI Resolutions Steadily Climbing

We must continue to be unified in our message that this legislation violates the Constitution of Virginia in that it usurps the role of local school boards in supervising and managing the public schools of the Commonwealth. Local control ensures that the community has a say in spending tax dollars, selecting curriculum, and making sure the needs of every child in the community are met. School boards must continue to be the voice of public education by having a sense of urgency in our messaging and being proactive in our delivery on advancing student achievement. By aligning our efforts and speaking with “one voice”, we will have a far greater impact than we would on an individual basis. This is where the true strength and influence of the VSBA comes from—all of you.

If your division has passed a resolution in support of the OEI lawsuit and you are not on this list, please e-mail Peter J. Sengenberger, assistant executive director, at peter@vsba.org.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Albemarle County | Clarke County | Halifax County | Nelson County | Rockingham County |
| Alleghany County | Covington City | Henry County | New Kent County | Russell County |
| Amelia County | Cumberland County | Highland County | Newport News City | Scott County |
| Appomattox County | Danville City | Isle of Wight County | Northampton County | Shenandoah County |
| Augusta County | Dickenson County | King George County | Norton City | Smyth County |
| Alexandria City | Dinwiddie County | King William County | Nottoway County | Spotsylvania County |
| Alexandria City Council | Fairfax City | Lancaster County | Orange County | Staunton City |
| Bath County | Fairfax County | Loudoun County | Page County | Suffolk City |
| Bedford County | Falls Church City | Lunenburg County | Petersburg City | Surry County |
| Bland County | Fauquier County | Lynchburg City | Pittsylvania County | Tazewell County |
| Botetourt County | Floyd County | Madison County | Portsmouth City | Virginia Beach City |
| Bristol City | Fluvanna County | Madison County Board of Supervisors | Powhatan County | Washington County |
| Buchanan County | Franklin City | Manassas City | Prince Edward County | Waynesboro City |
| Buckingham County | Franklin County | Manassas Park City | Prince William County | West Point Town |
| Campbell County | Giles County | Martinsville City | Pulaski County | Westmoreland County |
| Caroline County | Gloucester County | Mathews County | Radford City | Williamsburg/James City County |
| Carroll County | Goochland County | Middlesex County | Rappahannock County | Wise County |
| Charlotte County | Grayson County | Montgomery County | Roanoke City | Wythe County |
| Charlottesville City | Greensville County | NAACP, Virginia Chapter | Roanoke County | York County |
| Chesapeake City | Hampton City | | Rockbridge County | |
| | Harrisonburg City | | | |



Superintendent Evaluation: Developing a Model to Meet New VDOE Guidelines

Are you prepared to meet the July 1, 2014 implementation date for the revised evaluation model for your superintendent? The deadline is rapidly approaching, and as a result the VSBA is providing special advisory services to assist you in this process.

The Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Superintendents developed by the Virginia Department of Education provide a wealth of information regarding the new requirements. However, filtering through this document to determine what is required and what is optional requires focused attention. For some, the changes to their current evaluation model may be minor, while others face major revisions in order to be in compliance with the regulations.

In response to member requests, the VSBA is offering one-day workshops that are 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 their own models. Individual consultation and support will be provided

throughout the session as participants work on their revisions.

Sessions are available on January 21, February 21 and March 10, and will be held at the VSBA offices in Charlottesville from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, with additional time available until 3:00 pm for individual consultation. The cost is \$150 per person, and preregistration is required. Participants only need to attend one session.

To register for a session or if you have any questions, please contact Samantha S. Bosserman, director of membership services, at samantha@vsba.org.

AVAILABLE DATES:

January 21, 2014

February 21, 2014. **Full. No Availability.**

March 10, 2014

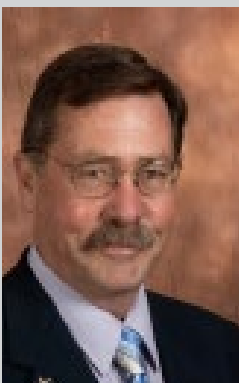
TIME:

9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

LOCATION:

VSBA Offices, 200 Hansen Road, Charlottesville, VA

PROFILE IN LEADERSHIP



Donald M. McCann, III
Lancaster County
Chair, VSBA Eastern
Region

What is your hometown?

Bath, Ohio, along the banks of the Cuyahoga River.

How long have you been a board member?

Ten years.

What books do you have at your bedside?

Atlantic Monthly; New Yorker; several books by Alice Walker; and Eats, Shoots and Leaves by Lynne Truss

What/Who inspires you?

All third graders.

What is your motto as a board member?

Dial down the noise. Look for ways to improve.

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

Making education real, fun, and relative to the world outside of the classroom.

What is your advice to new board members?

You are but one member of a decision making body. Always speak your opinion, but gracefully accept the decision made by the majority, even if it doesn't go your way.

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

Helping to insure that all Lancaster Primary 2nd graders take swimming lessons.

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

Other than the superior staff, excellent conferences, and networking provided, the annual trek for board development has always been fruitful.



For Schools, Emergency Preparedness is Essential

For families throughout Virginia, the safety of children in schools is top of mind—perhaps now more than ever, in the wake of terrible tragedies that have occurred in recent years. It’s up to school leadership to help enhance the security of school facilities and to perform the necessary due diligence to help with preparation and response to any school emergency.

Every school has emergency operations plan, traditionally in the form of binders containing emergency response plans, building maps, and contact information. While often comprehensive, these paper plans are often inaccessible, perhaps tucked away in an office, during the emergency or in its immediate aftermath.

Bristol Virginia Public Schools is utilizing technology to assist in organizing all of their emergency plans and floor plans and will be giving access to their first responders. In addition, their first responders will have instant access to live video feeds. All of this is possible through a program called NaviGate Prepared.

Together, we can change the way that first responders, communities and school administrators think about school safety and emergency response. NaviGate Prepared from Lauren Innovations is a comprehensive, web-based school safety platform that can help

911 dispatch, law enforcement, firefighters, medics and school administrators respond more quickly to an emergency by putting critical information directly into the hands of those who need it most. In addition, schools and first responders can better prepare for emergencies by utilizing NaviGate Prepared.

As a cloud-based platform, NaviGate Prepared integrates a school’s entire emergency operations plan and makes it accessible via any internet enabled device. NaviGate Prepared provides eyes-on access to floor plans, call lists and live video feeds for first responders, before they arrive on scene, enabling swift response.

NaviGate Prepared is SAFETY Act Designated as an anti-terrorism-level technology by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It has been implemented in schools across the United States and is now being made available to Virginia school divisions. To learn more about how NaviGate Prepared can help your division, visit www.NaviGatePrepared.com and request a demonstration.

Ask the Expert

Q. Is the superintendent’s contract a public document?

A. Yes. In fact, contracts of all public employees who earn over \$10,000 per year are public documents. Va. Code § 2.2-3705.8.

IMPORTANT MONTHS/WEEKS

January Bullying Prevention Month

In an effort to promote awareness of school bullying, the VSBA Board of Directors has designated the month of January as VSBA Bullying Prevention Month. Childhood bullying is a significant problem nationwide. It can cause school absenteeism, mental and physical stress, poor school performance, poor self-esteem, and, in some cases, school violence. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to help spread awareness of the serious nature of bullying in our schools.

February School Board Appreciation Month

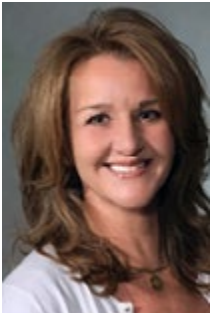
Salute the service of the almost 850 school board members in Virginia in February 2014 during School Board Appreciation Month. The theme — Local Schools, Local Decisions — reflects the importance of ensuring that the future of public education remains in the hands of the community it serves. Local school boards keep the public in charge of public schools, since they represent their community’s beliefs and values. The month-long observance is an opportunity for your school division and community to build a stronger understanding of the crucial role school boards assume in a representative democracy.

February 17-21 School Board Clerk Appreciation Week

The VSBA Board of Directors has designated the third week in February (February 17- 21, 2014) as VSBA School Board Clerk Appreciation Week, with a goal of building awareness of the role board clerks play in assisting school board members, superintendents, and our local schools. Please plan now to show your local clerks you appreciate their work.



Meet the 2013-2014 VSBA Board of Directors



Wilson



Wade



Boyles



Kidd



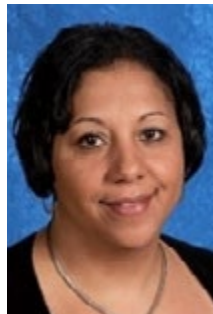
Hundley



Albrecht



Franklin



Washington



McCann



Bailey



Bullock



McCammon



Foster



Larson



Stewart

PRESIDENT

Kerri M. Wilson
Harrisonburg City

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Juandiego R. Wade
Charlottesville City

PAST PRESIDENT

Roy K. Boyles
Warren County

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Finance/Audit Committee Chair

William S. Kidd
Wythe County

**Legislative Positions/
Federal Relations Committee
Chair**

Robert L. Hundley, Jr.
Hanover County

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Scott M. Albrecht
Manassas City

REGIONAL CHAIRMEN

Blue Ridge

Penny Franklin
Montgomery County

Central

Camilla Washington
Fluvanna County

Eastern

Donald M. McCann, III
Lancaster County

Northeastern

Jarvis E. Bailey
Fredericksburg City

Southern

Thomas C. Bullock
Mecklenburg County

Southside

Gregory K. McCammon
Dinwiddie County

Southwest

Tyrone R. Foster
Bristol City

Tidewater

Ruth M. Larson
Williamsburg/James City County

Valley

Leonard S. Stewart, Jr.
Lexington City

Gina G. Patterson, executive director

Peter J. Sengenberger, 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.