



**VSBA Executive Director  
Barbara J. Coyle**

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

**August 14**  
Webinar on School Safety Policies and Practice

**August 21**  
VSBA Board of Directors Meeting

**September 30**  
Legislative Advocacy Conference  
**CLICK HERE**

**NEW!**

**October 2**  
Webinar (topic tba)

**November 20-22**  
VSBA Annual Convention

## From the Executive Director

It's hard to believe that we are midway through the summer isn't it? Yet here we are thinking ahead to cooler days and school openings.

Before we leave summer totally behind, I'd like to recap the hot topic of June—the merger of the VSBA Insurance Services Workers' Compensation Group and the Property Casualty Pool with its counterpart, the Virginia Association of Counties Risk Pool (VACoRP). The VSBA Board of Directors at its March meeting established a VSBA Task Force on Insurance Services to examine the viability of those programs long-term. Members of the Task Force included representatives of both the VSBA Board and the two VSBA Insurance Supervisory Boards.

The Task Force and the Supervisory Boards met four times over a period of thirteen weeks to learn about how the programs were structured and operated, listen to a report on the current and future financial picture, and hear from a school board association executive director who had shepherded his association through a meltdown of their insurance programs. As a result of that bank of knowledge, the VSBA contracted auditors who presented

several options ranging from infusing money to restructuring to merging with a like entity.

The Task Force and the Supervisory Boards chose the merger option and authorized me to proceed with overseeing the best possible deal for both the VSBA and the insurance programs. Our primary goals were: protect the VSBA's good name, prevent any financial assessment to members of the Pool and Group, and get a merger approved by June 30, 2013.

Thanks to the intense hard and fast work of numerous people, those goals were achieved. I want to publicly thank our auditors Adams, Jenkins & Cheatham, PC, our bankers at First Citizens Bank, our own insurance employee Lisa Thacker, our merger entity VACoRP (especially Chris Carey), and the Bureau of Insurance for its approval of the merger on June 29. But most of all I want to thank the members of the VSBA Insurance Services Task Force for studying the facts and realizing it was time to restructure a VSBA service that was no longer sustainable. If VSBA is to stay true to its tagline of Leadership - Advocacy - Support, this action was necessary.

## VSBA Insurance Services Update

Effective July 1, 2013, the VSBA Property Casualty Pool and VSBA Workers' Compensation Group (collectively, VSBA Insurance Services) merged all insurance operations with the Virginia Association of Counties Risk Pool (VACoRP). The merged entity will retain the VACoRP name, and services will be based in the VACoRP Roanoke offices. The merged entity creates the largest self-insurance group in Virginia with 88 counties, 105 school divisions, 15 municipalities, and over 100 authorities and related entities, generating almost \$60 million in annual contributions. The merger of the operations only affects the insurance program and not any aspect of Virginia As-

sociation of Counties (VACo) or Virginia School Boards Association activities or services.

VACoRP has been in operation since 1993 and has maintained a singular focus to provide stability to its membership. This stability can be seen in the cost, variety of services and scope of coverage. The growth in premium contributions and exposures as a result of the merger will lead to additional benefits for the membership.

### Cost

VACoRP has always maintained separate pricing models for school divisions and local governments that are only enhanced by this merger. VACoRP is now in a position to provide even better price stability. With over 100



*Continued on page 2*



## VACoRP Contact Information

308 Market St SE  
 Suites 1 & 2  
 Roanoke, VA 24011  
 Phone: 540-345-8500  
 or 888-822-6772  
 Fax: 540-345-5330  
[www.vacoins.org](http://www.vacoins.org)

## Insurance Services Update *continued from page 1*

school divisions, the ability to set more accurate pricing and the ability to leverage the size of the group improves. In addition, the Pool can retain risk more accurately, which will facilitate better reinsurance program pricing and structure.

## Coverage

VACoRP already provides the broadest coverage program, and the merger will lead to coverage improvements. The student accident program will be better tailored to actual needs based on claims histories. The security risk management coverage, which provides enhanced coverage for violent acts occurring on school property, will be enhanced with additional training opportunities included.

## Service

With the addition of the Brooks Safety Group, VACoRP staff will be able to make additional services available. All VACoRP members will benefit from the coordinated delivery of Risk Control services. VACoRP is also completing a broader roll out of the Company Nurse On-Call triage and claims reporting services. VACoRP web-services are continuing to be enhanced with a recent update and more enhancements slated for this fall.

VACoRP is proud to be the only self insurance group endorsed by two major statewide associations. The partnership with VSBA and VACo will provide benefits to local governments for many years to come. VACoRP and its staff look forward to providing the most efficient and responsive program to school divisions and local governmental entities across the state.



## VSBA Conference on Education Brings Together Educational Leaders From Across Virginia

Over 500 Virginia school board members, administrators, educators, attorneys and governing officials attended the VSBA's 28<sup>th</sup> annual Conference on Education in Richmond, VA on July 23, 2013.

The purpose of the conference was to offer participants the opportunity to learn about successful educational practices occurring throughout the Commonwealth.

Participants attended their choice of more than 60 mini-workshops on topics such as school law, curriculum and instruction, technology integration, community relations, school safety, testing, finance, special education, and community partnerships. The presenters included educators from state and local levels, university and college professors, business representatives, and attorneys.

Attendees also heard remarks from several guest speakers, including:

- Randi Richards-Lutz, National School Administrator of the Year for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). Richards-Lutz is the career and technical administrator for Culpeper County Public Schools (Virginia).
- Virginia Secretary of Education Laura Fornash
- Emma Buchanan, a rising junior at Patrick Henry High School in Glade Spring, Virginia. She is on the Youth Council for the Fuel Up To Play 60 program and serves as the Virginia Student Council Association Region Seven Representative.





## NAEP – Long-Term Trends in Academic Progress

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released the results of the 2012 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) long-term mathematical and reading assessments for 9-, 13-, and 17-year-olds. The results provide information on how United States students perform now compared to students 40 years ago. Results include both public and private school students, and are given in scale scores (0-500) where 10 points is roughly equivalent to one year's worth of learning.

### MATH HIGHLIGHTS

*(adapted from the NSBA Center for Public Education Summaries)*

#### 9-Year-Olds

Among 9-year-old students, there has been significant improvement from 1973 to 2012.

- Student achievement in math has increased by two and half years' worth of learning (25 points).
- Achievement gaps have narrowed significantly over the past four decades.
  - The Black-White achievement gap narrowed from 35 points in 1973 to 25 points in 2012.
  - The Hispanic-White achievement gap narrowed from 23 points in 1973 to 17 points in 2012 while Hispanic enrollment increased from 5 percent in 1978 to 26 percent in 2012.
- During this time period, black students increased their scores by 36 points, Hispanic students increased their scores by 32 points, and white students improved their scores by 27 points.
- Despite these improvements over the course of 40 years, there has been no significant improvement since 2004.

#### 13-Year-Olds

Among 13-year-old students, there has been significant improvement from 1973 to 2012.

- Student scores have increased by 19 points, which is nearly two years' worth of learning.
- Scores have improved from 2008.
- Achievement gaps have narrowed significantly over the past four decades.
  - The Black-White achievement gap narrowed by 18 points (46 to 28 point gap).
  - The Hispanic-White achievement gap narrowed by 14 points (35 to 21 point gap), while Hispanic enrollment increased from 6 percent in 1978 to 21 percent in 2012.
- During this time period, black students increased their scores by 36 points, Hispanic students increased their scores by 32 points, and white students improved their scores by 19 points.
- More 13-year-olds are taking Algebra than ever before.
- In 2012, 34 percent of 13-year-olds took Algebra compared to 16 percent in 1986.
- Nearly three-quarters of 13-year-olds had taken at least Pre-Algebra in 2012, up from 39 percent in 1986.

#### 17-Year-Olds

On average, 17-year-olds have made little progress since 1973. (\*\* see note on page 4)

- Overall scores were not significantly

different between 1973 and 2012.

- However, lower performing students have made modest gains:
  - Scores at the 10th percentile were 12 points higher in 2012 than in 1978.
  - Scores at the 25th percentile increased 11 points between 1978 and 2012, while scores at the 50th percentile increased by 6 points.
- Achievement gaps have narrowed significantly over the past four decades.
  - The Black-White achievement gap narrowed by 14 points (40 to 26 point gap).
  - The Hispanic-White achievement gap narrowed 14 points (33 to 19 point gap), while Hispanic enrollment increased from 4 percent in 1978 to 22 percent in 2012.
- During this time period, black students increased their scores by 18 points, Hispanic students increased their scores by 17 points, and white students improved their scores by 4 points.
- Nearly four times as many students took Calculus or Pre-Calculus in 2012 than in 1978.
  - In 2012, 23 percent of students took Calculus or Pre-Calculus compare to 6 percent in 1978.
  - In 2012, just 22 percent of students' highest math course was geometry compared to 53 percent in 1978.

*Continued on page 4*

**10 points**  
is roughly equal to 1 year of learning



## NAEP – Long-Term Trends in Academic Progress *continued from page 3*

### READING HIGHLIGHTS

*(adapted from the NSBA Center for Public Education Summaries)*

#### 9-Year-Olds

Among 9-year-old students, there has been significant improvement from 1971 to 2012.

- Student achievement in reading has increased by 13 points, or just over a year's worth of learning.
  - There was also significant growth from 2004 to 2012 (5 points), but it remained relatively flat from 2008 until the present.
- Achievement gaps have narrowed significantly over the past four decades.
  - The Black-White achievement gap narrowed by 21 points (44 to 23 point gap) since 1971.
  - The Hispanic-White achievement gap narrowed by 13 points (34 to 21 point gap) since 1975, while Hispanic enrollment increased from 6 percent in 1978 to 21 percent in 2012.
- Black students increased their scores by 36 points since 1971, Hispanic students increased their scores by 25 points since 1975, and white students improved their scores by 15 points since 1971.
- Nine-year-olds were the only age group to see a significant decrease in the gender gap from 1971 to 2012.
  - In 1971, boys earned an average score of 201, while girls scored 214. By 2012, this 13-point gap shrunk to a 5-point deficit with boys scoring 218 and girls scoring 223.

#### 13-Year-Olds

Among 13-year-old students, there has been improvement from 1971 to 2012.

- Student achievement in reading has increased by 8 points, or just under a year's worth of learning.
- Scores have improved from 2008.
- Achievement gaps have narrowed significantly over the past four decades.
  - The Black-White achievement gap narrowed by 16 points (39 to 23 point gap) since 1971.
  - The Hispanic-White achievement gap narrowed by 9 points (30 to 21 point gap) since 1975.
- Black students increased their scores by 25 points since 1971, Hispanic students increased their scores by 17 points since 1975, and white students improved their scores by 9 points since 1971.
- The percentage of 13-year-olds reporting that they read for fun dropped from 35% in 1984 to 27% in 2012.

#### 17-Year-Olds

On average, 17-year-olds have made little progress since 1971. (\*\* see note below)

- Overall scores were not significantly different between 1971 (285) and 2012 (287).
- However, lower performing students have made modest gains:
  - Scores at the 10th percentile were 7 points higher in 2012 than in 1971.

- Scores at the 25th percentile increased 4 points between 1971 and 2012, while scores at the 50th percentile increased by 1 point.
- Students at the highest percentiles (75th and 90th) saw modest decreases in both long-term (since 1971) and short-term (since 2008) average scores.
- Achievement gaps have narrowed significantly over the past four decades.
  - The Black-White achievement gap narrowed by 27 points (53 to 26 point gap) since 1971.
  - The Hispanic-White achievement gap narrowed by 20 points (41 to 21 point gap) since 1975.
- Black students increased their scores by 30 points since 1971, Hispanic students increased their scores by 22 points since 1975, and white students improved their scores by 4 points since 1971.
- The percentage of 17-year-olds reporting that they read for fun dropped from 31% in 1984 to 19% in 2012.

**\*\* Peggy Carr, an associate commissioner with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), stated in a Reuters article that the seeming lack of progress among 17-year-olds is the result of fewer students who struggle academically dropping out of school. Therefore, more students who are lower performing are now taking the NAEP tests, thus impacting the overall scores. For the full Reuters article, [click here](#).**

### NSBA Center for Public Education Summaries:

<http://blog.centerforpubliceducation.org/2013/06/28/minority-students-make-big-gains-on-naep/>

### NCES Full Report:

<https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/main2012/pdf/2013456.pdf>

### RELATED NEWS STORIES

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/27/test-scores-achievement-gap-naep\\_n\\_3509716.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/27/test-scores-achievement-gap-naep_n_3509716.html)

[http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/2013/7/1/naep\\_report\\_hispanic\\_students\\_scoring\\_higher.htm](http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/2013/7/1/naep_report_hispanic_students_scoring_higher.htm)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/27/us-usa-education-study-idUSBRE95Q0WZ20130627>



## Advocate: Educate in Order to Help Legislate

By Dr. Warren A. Stewart, board member, Norfolk City Public Schools

As we each begin our new school year, together we may be unified by our advocacy for public education in Virginia. Especially in Virginia, this critical advocacy has historic roots as celebrated by Thomas Jefferson in his August 13, 1786 letter: *"I think by far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom and happiness..."*

Since retiring over a dozen years ago, I have had the honor of advocating in order to enhance the quality of life for all as we age, and most recently serving as a local school board member. In both capacities, I have successfully defined "to advocate" as "to educate in order to help legislate" and applied these three public policy principles: (1) communicate timely re-

quests, (2) ensure public non-partisanship, and (3) incorporate constituent visits.

While each of these principles could best be explained in an essay or a chapter, I briefly explicate them now in order to stimulate our timely communication, coordination, cooperation, and/or collaboration for this coming election year.

**Communicate Timely Requests:** According to political leaders of each Virginia party, we must ask candidates to support or oppose public policy positions when they can best hear and consider the issues in Virginia, and this often is in August or early September. To wait until January when the legislative session begins or right after the November election is often untimely and frustrating to advocates as well as representatives.

**Ensure Public Non-Partisanship:** Only communicate all written candidate responses without declaring preferred ones. Each response will speak for itself as each citizen considers it.

**Incorporate Constituent Visits:** Have school board members visit their own elected officials individually, in pairs, and/or with parent/community partners presenting specific policy questions, such as:

- Will you support legislation allowing public schools to open before Labor Day?
- Will you support legislation that will allow school boards to carry unexpended local funds over to the next fiscal year without an appropriation by their appropriating body?
- Will you oppose any legislation expanding of recently enacted tax credit law for supporting private school scholarships?
- Will you oppose any legislation that will give non-public school students the right to participate in VHSL activities?

Collecting such truthful information will facilitate judging subsequent legislative actions and developing concomitant questions for next August and Augusts in the future as individually and together we "...educate in order to help legislate..."

**10<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL VSBA 5k WALK / RUN**

**VSBA**  
Virginia School Boards Association

ANNUAL CONVENTION  
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA  
NOVEMBER 21, 2013 · 7:15AM

PROUD SPONSORS



GOLD



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GOLD



## BOD Nominating Committee Recommendations

The VSBA Board of Directors nominating committee has recommended Juandiego R. Wade (Charlottesville City) as the 2014 VSBA president-elect, and Scott M. Albrecht (Manassas City) as a 2014 at-large member. These recommendations will be brought before the VSBA Delegate Assembly for a vote at the VSBA Annual Convention in November.

Juandiego has been a member of the Charlottesville City School Board since 2006. He has served one year as chairman of the Federal Relations

Committee, one year as a VSBA at-large member, and two years on the VSBA Legislative Positions Committee.



Wade



Albrecht

Scott has been a member of the Manassas City School Board since 2000. He is the chair of the Manassas board and currently serves as the chair of the board for the regional Governor's School at Innovation Park. He has served one year as chairman of the Northeastern Region, and was previously a member of the VSBA Federal Relations Network.

### Ask the Expert

**Q. How does a special meeting get called?**

**A.** It's a local decision. School boards, which have adopted VSBA sample policy BDB Special School Board Meetings, hold special meetings when called by the chair or by two or more school board members. That policy also provides that special meetings may be held as long as each board member is notified or a reasonable attempt has been made to notify each member. Notice of a special meeting must be given to the public at the same time notice is given to the school board members.



# VSBA

## Food for Thought

meal access • meal quality

### 2013 VSBA Food For Thought Competition Winners Recognized

Six school divisions received top honors in the 2013 VSBA Food for Thought Competition. The competition is part of VSBA Past-President Joan E. Wodiska's Food for Thought initiative, which was created in 2012 to educate, engage, and empower school leaders to address childhood hunger and provide all students in Virginia with healthier, more nutritious school meals. This is the second year the awards were given out. Winning divisions were recognized at the

VSBA Conference on Education on July 23 at the Richmond Marriott.

The competition was divided into three separate categories – Healthy School Meals, Meal Access to Fight Hunger, and Wellness and Physical Activity. Judges, including two professional nutritionists, a food bank professional, and a former school board member, selected the winners from over 29 entries. The winning school divisions are as follows:

#### Healthy School Meals

Winner (Below 10,000 Student Population) - **Isle of Wight County Public Schools**

Winner (Above 10,001 Student Population) - **Norfolk City Public Schools**

#### Meal Access to Fight Hunger

Winner (Below 10,000 Student Population) - **Cumberland County Public Schools**

Winner (Above 10,001 Student Population) - **Portsmouth City Public Schools**

#### Wellness and Physical Activity

Winner (Below 10,000 Student Population) - **Manassas City Public Schools**

Winner (Above 10,001 Student Population) - **Chesterfield County Public Schools**



# Regional Forum Highlights

## Blue Ridge

The Blue Ridge Regional Forum had a great turnout with 16 school divisions represented and 90 people in attendance. VSBA staff members presented on VSBA master board training, and the Floyd County High School band and choral group entertained attendees. The new regional officers for 2014 are Penny Franklin (Montgomery County) and Mike Stovall (Roanoke County).

## Central

The Central Regional Forum was held at the Carter G. Woodson Education Complex in Buckingham County, which was the 2012 VSBA Exhibition of School Architecture People's Choice Award winner and Gold Design Award winner. Anne Rowe, from the Virginia Department of Education, provided a detailed update on Career and Technical Education in Virginia. The new regional officers for 2014 are Mary Cunningham (Nelson County) and Camilla Washington (Fluvanna County).

## Eastern

The Eastern Regional Forum was hosted by King George County at their high school, which was opened in 2009. Dr. Michael Gill, director of career and technical education for Chesterfield County Public Schools, provided an excellent presentation titled "CTE: Making Education Relevant for Tomorrow's Workforce Needs". The new regional officers for 2014 are Don McCann (Lancaster County) and John Persinger (Mathews County).

## Northeast

The Northeast Regional Forum took place at Mountain View High School in Stafford. Dr. David Sam, president of Germanna Community College, presented on post secondary (specifically community college) education in the Commonwealth, and provided specifics of how Germanna has partnered with Stafford County Schools to help high school students be more career-ready. The new regional officers for 2014 are Jarvis Bailey (Fredericksburg City) and Nanette Kidby (Stafford County).

## Southern

Sixty-four attendees, including school board members, superintendents, VSBA officers, and staff members from Lunenburg County attended the Southern Regional Forum. Attendees broke into small discussion groups to converse about hot topic issues like the challenges of being a school board member, the impact of General Assembly legislation,

and short- and long-term issues facing regional divisions. The new regional officers for 2014 are Thomas Bullock (Mecklenburg County) and Brette Arbogast (Charlotte County).

## Southside

The Southside Regional Forum took place at Hopewell High School in Hopewell. Speakers included Jasmine Gore, vice-mayor of Hopewell and recent graduate of Hopewell High School, and Dr. John Fahey, superintendent of Hopewell City Public Schools. The new regional officers for 2014 are Gregory McCammon (Dinwiddie County) and Elizabeth Hardy (Goochland County).

## Southwest

The Southwest Regional Forum was held in the newly renovated Bristol Virginia Public Schools Administration Office. Delegate Joseph P. Johnson, Jr., was honored for his service and dedication to public education throughout his tenure in the Virginia House of Delegates. Virginia High School choral students presented a program of entertainment and culinary arts students served a delicious dinner to all in attendance. The new regional officers for 2014 are Willie Sullivan (Buchanan County) and Tyrone Foster (Bristol City).

## Tidewater

School board members, local officials, and members of the Norfolk Education Foundation Board of Directors gathered together for the Tidewater Regional Forum, which was hosted by Norfolk Public Schools. Attendees heard from Dr. Sonya Whitaker, superintendent at Fairmont School District #89 in Lockport, Illinois. Her presentation was titled "Where Do We Go from Here? Culturally Responsive Leading for Increased Student Achievement." Awards of Appreciation were presented to VSBA Past Presidents Dr. Elizabeth Daniels and Barbara Haywood for services provided at the State and National School Boards Associations. The new regional officers for 2014 are Ruth Larson (Williamsburg/James City County) and Rodney Jordan (Norfolk City).

## Valley

The Valley Regional Forum was held Lexington City's Lylburn Downing Middle School. Garth Wheeler, director of the department of criminal justice services, spoke on partnerships between the justice department and school divisions and the importance of school safety. The new regional officers for 2014 are Leonard Stewart (Lexington City) and Ron Ramsey (Staunton City).



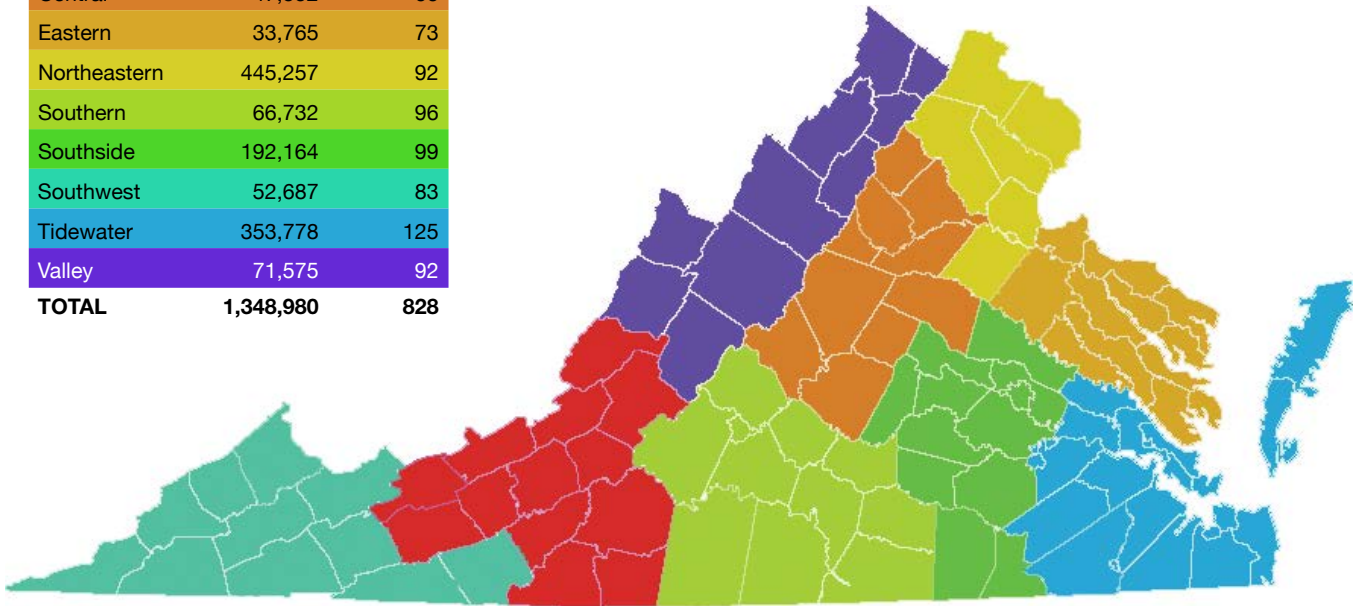
The 2013 VSBA Green Schools Challenge is now available. Please complete the challenge by September 30, 2013. For more information, please

**CLICK  
HERE**

<http://gogreenva.org/?/challenge/participate/id/2>



VSBA Region	Student Enrollment	School Board Members
Blue Ridge	85,470	102
Central	47,552	66
Eastern	33,765	73
Northeastern	445,257	92
Southern	66,732	96
Southside	192,164	99
Southwest	52,687	83
Tidewater	353,778	125
Valley	71,575	92
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,348,980</b>	<b>828</b>



## VSBA Board of Directors

Roy K. Boyles, President  
Warren County

Joan E. Wodiska, Past President  
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Harrisonburg City

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William S. Kidd, Chair, Finance/Audit Comm.  
Wythe County

Juandiego Wade, Chair, Fed. Rel. Comm.  
Charlottesville City

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Roger L. Long, Chair, Southern Region  
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Washington County

Elsie M. Dennis, Chair, Tidewater Region  
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Floyd County

Mary S. Cunningham, Chair, Central Region  
Nelson County

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

Kimberly B. Gray, Chair, Southside Region  
Richmond City

Leonard Stewart, Jr., Chair, Valley Region  
Lexington Virginia

Barbara S. Haywood, Representative NSBA BOD  
York County

Julie Bennington, Insurance Pools Supervisory Board  
Bedford County

Barbara Coyle, executive director

Gina Patterson, deputy 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.