



VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association®

Leadership · Advocacy · Support

VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship

Class of 2027



Kaylee Bishop
2026 Eastern Region Recipient



Dexter Richardson
2026 Southside Region Recipient



Noah Bolling
2026 Valley Region Recipient



Titus Er
2026 Northeastern Region Recipient



Lauren Baker
2026 Southwest Region Recipient



Jacob Howard
2026 Southern Region Recipient



Zaharra Colla
2026 Central Region Recipient



Daksh Master
2026 Tidewater Region Recipient



Kaylee Pettit
2026 Blue Ridge Region Recipient

Participation in VSBA initiatives and observances is optional. School boards in Virginia have the discretion on whether to participate locally. Any related materials from the Association are shared as suggested ideas for implementation for any member board that may choose to do so.

VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship

OVERVIEW

The VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship continues to recognize and support outstanding high school seniors across the Commonwealth. Established in 2025, this scholarship celebrates students who demonstrate a strong commitment to **academic excellence, community engagement, and who also have well-defined career aspirations**. By investing in the future of these students, VSBA reaffirms its dedication to the advancement of public education and the successes of young leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

This year's scholarship is open to **graduating seniors from the Class of 2027**. **Scholarship recipients will be honored and presented with their awards at the 2027 VSBA Regional Spring Networking Forums**, which will take place between March 2 and May 6, 2027, at varying locations in each VSBA region. **Attendance at the respective Regional Networking Forum is required in order to receive the scholarship.**

This year, VSBA is offering each of the winning regional students a **\$5,000 scholarship**.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for the VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship, applicants must:

- **Must be able to attend their respective Spring Regional Networking Forum*** (a full list of regional networking forum dates is included on the last page of this guide). If you are unsure of which VSBA region your school division is in, please visit <https://www.vsba.org/vsba-regions/>.
- Be a **high school senior graduating in Spring 2027**, in a VSBA member school division.
- **Reside in and attend a public high school in a school division that is a member of the VSBA and located within one of the nine VSBA regions**. For a complete list of VSBA regions and member school divisions, please visit <https://www.vsba.org/vsba-regions/>.
- Demonstrate **commitment to their local community** through service and leadership.
- Plan to pursue **post-secondary education**, which may include college, vocational school, or another accredited career training program.

All scholarships will be paid directly to the recipient's post-secondary institution (as defined above) upon verification of enrollment.

All applications must be completed and submitted **no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, January 15, 2027**. Receipt of application will be time-stamped by VSBA. Winners will be notified in February 2027.

If you have any questions, please contact Bella Corbo, Senior Member Engagement & Communications Specialist, at bella@vsba.org or call 434-295-8722 ext. 2.

**A Spring Regional Networking Forum is a meeting for school divisions to gather and network with other local school divisions within their region. Each of the nine VSBA regions has one meeting in the spring.*

VSBA Board of Directors Regional Scholarship

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD THEME:

Each year, VSBA selects a theme to guide applicant essays. This year's theme, "**Rooted in Public Education,**" invites students to reflect on how their experiences in public education have shaped their personal growth, influenced their future goals, and prepared them to make meaningful contributions to their communities.

APPLICATION PROCESS & DEADLINE:

The deadline for submissions is **4:00 p.m. Friday, January 15, 2027.**

Submission requirements:

- **Completed application form.** The application form can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VSBARegionalScholar26>
- A **750-1,000 word essay** on this year's theme, **Rooted in Public Education**, mentioned above.
- **Resume** detailing academic and extracurricular activities, leadership roles, and community service.
- Provide a **current high school transcript** that includes grades, grade point average, and class rank (if applicable). The transcript must be complete through junior year.
- **Two letters of recommendation** (one from a school official and one from a community member).

Applications must be submitted electronically via the VSBA online application form found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VSBARegionalScholar26>. The application form will have required attachment questions where you will be able to upload your essay, resume, and two letters of recommendation.

All applications must be completed and submitted **no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, January 15, 2027. Receipt of applications will be time-stamped by VSBA.**

All scholarship winners must be able to attend their respective Spring Regional Networking Forum.

The Spring Regional Networking Forums are an opportunity for school divisions to gather and network regionally with other local school divisions within their forums. Each of the nine VSBA regions has a forum.

Winners will be notified in February 2027. This year, the VSBA will award a \$5,000 scholarship to each regional winner.

All scholarships will be paid directly to the recipient's post-secondary institution (as defined on the previous page).

Selection Criteria

Applicants will be evaluated based on a holistic review process that considers multiple aspects of their academic journey, leadership potential, community involvement, and future aspirations. Rather than focusing solely on grades, the selection committee assesses candidates based on their ability to articulate their goals, demonstrate a history of service and leadership, and showcase resilience and dedication to their education. Each component of the application carries specific weight to ensure a fair and balanced evaluation that recognizes both academic effort and personal achievements.

The criteria are as follows:

1. **Essay (50%)** – A written response (750-1,000 words) reflecting on this year's theme, "Rooted in Public Education," by discussing:
 - a. How your public education experience has shaped your personal growth, influenced your future goals, and prepared you to make meaningful contributions to your community.
 - b. How the scholarship will support your educational and career goals.
 - c. Contributions you have already made to your community as a high school student.
 - d. Essays will be evaluated based on clarity, originality, depth of reflection, and alignment with the year's scholarship theme.
2. **Academic Performance (25%)** – While GPA will be considered, this is not a primary determining factor. Instead, the selection committee will look for:
 - a. Perseverance and effort in academics.
 - b. Improvement over time or demonstrated resilience in overcoming obstacles.
 - c. A commitment to learning and academic growth.
3. **Extracurricular Involvement & Leadership (25%)** – Assessment of participation in:
 - a. School organizations, clubs, or student government.
 - b. Community service initiatives, civic organizations, or local leadership roles.
 - c. Activities that align with your career aspirations and commitment to service.

2027 VSBA Regional Spring Network Forum Dates

<u>Region</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Eastern	March 2	Lancaster County
Central	March 8	Charlottesville City
Southside	March 16	Petersburg City
Blue Ridge	April 13	Roanoke County
Valley	April 20	Waynesboro City
Tidewater	April 22	Hampton City
Southern	April 27	Amherst County
Northeastern	April 29	Manassas City
Southwest	May 6	Washington County

***Please note – these dates are accurate as of August 12, 2026, and could change depending on availability. Additionally, the exact locations of the Regional Networking Forums have not yet been determined. Regional Networking Forum locations will be sent out to winners at a later date.**

All scholarship winners must be able to attend their respective Spring Regional Networking Forum.

The Spring Regional Networking Forums are an opportunity for school divisions to gather and network with other local school divisions within their region. Each of the nine VSBA regions has a forum.



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