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New VASSP board members attend orientation

As new members of the VASSP board of directors take their seats on the board, it is not without specific training. The newest members of the board participated in their orientation training on November 26-27, 2007, in Richmond at the VASSP office. Topics on board policies and procedures were presented by Executive Director Randy Barrack and discussed with incoming board members. The information shared will increase the board members' effectiveness at each meeting they attend. Congratulations to the following new members of the VASSP board of directors: Region 9 – Dr. John Word, principal, Kenmore Middle School, Arlington Division; Region 7 – Mr. Keith Perrigan, principal, Patrick Henry High School, Washington Division; and State Coordinator, Mrs. Janice Koslowski, principal, Eagle Ridge Middle School, Loudoun Division.



Janice Koslowski, John Word and Keith Perrigan

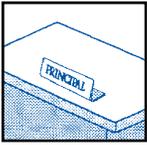
Webinar E-conference used by VFEL

Have you ever participated in a “webinar” training program? You may have to ask yourself, “What is a webinar?” In many ways, it is an online training program delivered virtually in person to multiple participants at the same time. Imagine you and fifteen others sitting at your computers focused on a particular topic and able to dialogue on the computer screen and the telephone. If you have not participated in a webinar, chances are you will. The Virginia Foundation for Educational Leadership and the Virginia Department of Education’s Office of School Improvement led by Dr. Kathleen Smith have organized a training program that utilizes the webinar format for delivering instruction on substantial school improvement.

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VASSP Board members with Governor Kaine, Virginia Board of Education President Mark Emblidge and Secretary of Education Thomas Morris



The President's Commentary

CAROL C. ROBINSON, Ed.D.
Fairfax County Division

VASSP had a fast start to the new year! We approved new members of the Board of Directors, attended legislative meetings, participated on committees, attended conferences and increased the leadership learning opportunities in our Professional Program Series™. VASSP is truly the go-to organization for staff and professional development training for all members at the secondary level.

We are excited about the addition of Dr. John Word, Region 9 Representative; Mr. Keith Perrigan, Region 7 Representative; and Ms. Janice Koslowski, State Coordinator, to the VASSP Board of Directors. They bring new ideas and enthusiasm to our meetings and many projects! As we welcome our newest members, we would also like to thank Don Vale for his service as our State Coordinator. He represented us at meetings, in conversations, and with NASSP. His last responsibility, at the end of October, was to organize and host the annual Region 3 meeting with the other states in our Region: North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and the District of Columbia. It was good to meet with our state association colleagues in the region. I take great pride in knowing that our own VASSP is unmatched in the region for what it has accomplished in serving our members.

In early November, I attended the conference for middle and high school assistant principals and lead teachers. There is no doubt the participants learned a great deal from the outstanding presenters: Ray McNulty (the new 3 Rs: relationships, rigor, and relevance), Kathleen Mehfoud (the law and special education), Kathleen Smith (meeting the challenges of accountability), and Roger Jones (update on education law). Two principals – Carolyn Custard and John Keeler – shared experiences through their active presentations: having and making those difficult conversations and decisions and securing the transition from middle to high school. This was a most beneficial conference for these very important members of our school leadership cadres.

Probably the event that was of most pride for me was to serve on the selection committee for Virginia's Teacher of the Year as the representative from VASSP. What an inspirational opportunity for us all! One teacher finalist from each area of the state was interviewed by an esteemed panel of educators and educational partners, with the winner announced during an evening banquet. To begin each interview, the finalist presented a 3-minute speech before the



Carol Robinson

selection committee that was so motivational that I wish we had taped them. Not every school system participated in this event. If your school system did not, encourage the division to nominate a teacher next year. It is well worth the time and effort.

If you ever wondered what teachers want and expect from their administrators, these exemplary teachers had the answers! Using categories suggested during Mr. McNulty's publications, the main expectations: relationships with students, parents, and community; rigor

that promotes strong leadership and instructional vision; and relevance that provides a connection between learning, community and real world opportunities. These teachers also talked about the importance of community involvement, both by themselves and by their students. They believed it was as important to model being a "lifelong volunteer" as it was to model being a "lifelong learner." Congratulations to all of the special teachers!

Finally, it was a pleasure for me to be with the other members of the VASSP Board for our pre-conference meeting with Governor Kaine. Please see photo on front cover and our summary discussion with the Governor in the Executive Director's article beginning on page five. VASSP members can be proud of the Governor's interest in what we do as instructional leaders in the Commonwealth.

**VASSP is
truly the go-to
organization
for staff and
professional
training.**

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VASSP is a unified affiliate of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS



Capitol Issues

Elizabeth H. "Bet" Neale
VASSP Director of Government Relations

The 2008 General Assembly convened on January 9 and, with over 3,000 bills in the hopper, everyone has had to hit the ground running. Things have changed – and they have stayed the same – with the Democrats taking a slight lead in numbers to assume the majority in the Senate and Republicans maintaining control of the House.

Topping the budget list for K-12 is funding for rebenchmarking and a state salary incentive for instructional personnel, which again this year includes principals and assistant principals. Governor Kaine included funding for rebenchmarking of the SOQ and a salary incentive proposal (3.5% in '09) as well as moneys to continue at-risk funding programs. The latter appear to be most at risk with legislators searching for ways to lower the budget price tag.

VASSP follows all bills related to public education and education budget issues. Talking with legislators, aides, department representatives and staff from the Governor's office is an important part of every day. Legislators want to know what VASSP has to say, and your local legislators want to know what you, their constituents, think. That is why it is important to follow the bills on the VASSP Web site, let us know your concerns and communicate those concerns to your local representatives. That is how we were successful in having principals and assistant principals included in past budget language and that is how we will continue to be successful on issues that affect how you manage your schools. Stay in tune and in touch and "read all about it" each week on the Web.

For more information about VASSP's lobbying activities at the Virginia General Assembly, please contact Bet Neale at bneale@vassp.org.



Bet Neale

continued from Webinar on page 1

"How do we best set schools on a course of continuous improvement?" is a question asked by author Sam Redding in his book, *The Mega System: Handbook for Continuous Improvement within a Community of the School*. Dr. Redding states that it is a particularly "thorny undertaking" attempting to move a particular school to become the model of what an effective school should be. However this is exactly what VFEL and VDOE's Office of School Improvement are attempting to do: provide school leaders with training and tools to address areas of needed improvement within their schools. The webinar format will be utilized to accomplish this.

To prepare for this training, VFEL selected a group of current and former school administrators to be the WebEx faculty. These individuals have been trained in the use of the webinar format and the content being utilized for this instruction. The WebEx faculty includes the following individuals and their current position: Dale Baird, consultant to the Ministry of Education in Peru and former Brunswick Division superintendent; Dr. Ronald Carey, executive director for elementary education with Richmond City Schools; Dr. Carol Cash, VA Tech adjunct professor; Dr. Brenda Cowlbeck, VCU adjunct professor and former King William Division superintendent; Ann Harman, consultant; Dr. Roger Jones, director of the VASSP Regional Center for Educational Leadership; John Porter, assistant superintendent with Alexandria City Schools; and Damon Rasnick, consultant, and former Dickenson Division superintendent.

VASSP has a long history rich with visionary leaders, resonating political issues, and professional resolve. VASSP was founded in the spirit of collegial determination and a desire to work with fellow educators and government leaders to foster a learning, literate, and ever expanding civil society. Members of the Association collectively began meeting with governors as far back as 1906 beginning with Governor Swanson. This tradition continued with its annual meeting between the VASSP Board of Directors and Governor Kaine on January 10. Last year the Board met with the Governor on January 11, 2007, and he joined us again at the Annual Virginia Middle and High School Principals Conference & Exposition last June.

The interaction between the State's Chief Executive and the VASSP Board was engaging, informative, comfortable, and direct. Governor Kaine is very open minded, embraces fresh ideas, and likes to talk about public school education. He loves to engage in lengthy dialogue and board members were more than ready to discuss at length VASSP's positions and priorities. Last year, VASSP focused its positions and priorities from a financial perspective and what the Association wanted in terms of programs, dollars, and cents. This year with the Governor's budget delivered to the General Assembly, VASSP focused on the following:

1. Leadership. VASSP has a respected and effective role in the leadership development of Virginia's middle level and high school administrators. The Association has a comprehensive leadership learning program for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, lead teachers, and administrative support personnel. The Association sponsors over 50 workshops, institutes, and conferences each year many of which are in collaboration



Carol Robinson, Governor Kaine, and Larry Lenz

VASSP has a long history rich with visionary leaders...

with the Department of Education. In addition, VASSP provides leadership training and encourages academic growth among elementary, middle, and high school students and teacher advisers through sponsorship of the Virginia Student Councils Association. VASSP also sponsors the Virginia Association of Honor Societies and the Virginia Association of Student Activity Advisers.

VASSP encourages a series of Governor leadership summits on such topics as literacy, and academic articulation and transition (articulation and transition issues between elementary and middle, between middle and high, and between high and college) that support the Governor's goals. VASSP pledges its support to work with the Administration on a series of statewide – Governor endorsed - leadership summits. The summits could showcase the many issues being addressed about literacy, articulation and transition, and other topics important to the Governor, and



Randy Barrack

provide an opportunity for the Commonwealth to develop a White Paper recommending exemplary strategies.

2. Redesign the American High School.

VASSP was a major partner in designing and now implementing the Commonwealth's National Governors Association (NGA) grant on *Redesigning the American High School*. VASSP strongly supports the concept and purpose of the P-16 Council that was created by the NGA grant and the leadership initiatives that are written in the grant such as the development of the first statewide Mentoring and Coaching Program for high school principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals' Breaking Ranks II training for all high school leaders. Three broad areas of focus emerge from this work and are supported in current literature/research as being the key to continued and sustained school improvement:

- Collaborative Leadership
- Personalization
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Through VASSP's support, leadership and collaboration with the Department of Education, the Commonwealth is nationally recognized as a state on the cutting edge of successful school reform and improved student performance. School based principal leadership is the driving force and common thread to success. VASSP has moved forward and developed a statewide Mentoring and Coaching Program for middle school principals and the NASSP Breaking Ranks in the Middle training for all middle school leaders. VASSP supports the expansion of current efforts in this area

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to create a differentiated executive coaching and mentoring program for school administrators who may be at different points in their careers (i.e., first year versus experienced). VASSP would be pleased to have the Governor endorse and sponsor a statewide program (e.g., Governor’s Mentoring and Coaching Program for Secondary Principals) administered by the Association with collaboration from the Department of Education.

3. Principals Advisory Committee. VASSP encourages the Governor to continue the “Governor’s Principals Advisory Committee” established by Governor Warner. Middle and high school principals are key leaders in communities across this Commonwealth and, as such, can provide the Governor with a unique and important perspective that other stakeholder groups can not offer. The Association believes such an advisory committee can provide the Governor practical solutions, realistic expectations and relevant policy applications in secondary education.

4. Licensure Revision. VASSP supports the current licensure regulations that require principals to have classroom teaching experience in order to receive an endorsement.

5. Discipline and School Management. VASSP opposes legislation aimed at diminishing administrative authority to maintain discipline or manage personnel.

6. Special Education. VASSP opposes legislation that would diminish the rights and responsibilities of school boards in special education cases and the ability of teachers and administrators to guide the education of students with disabilities in accordance with local school board policy, IDEIA and existing state law. VASSP also opposes legislation that would provide state funds for private services not included in a student’s IEP and that would create a private/public voucher system with public funds.

7. State Salary Supplement and Rebenchmarking. VASSP supports continuation of state salary supplements to local school divisions for all instructional personnel – including principals and assistant principals – and is strongly supportive of the Governor’s current salary incentive budget request that includes funding for bonus payments for all instructional personnel.

The Association applauds the Governor’s support and continuing commitment to public education in the Commonwealth and strongly endorses full funding of rebenchmarking of the Standards of Quality. VASSP believes that acknowledging the efforts and hard work of our teachers and administrators through state salary supplements, maintaining the Commonwealth’s commitment to quality standards for our schools and providing professional development and mentoring opportunities are critical to the efforts of Virginia school divisions to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and administrators and to maintain and enhance the highest quality educational experience for all students in the Commonwealth.

8. Teacher and Administrative Shortages. VASSP supports initiatives to address teacher and administrative shortages. Teacher and school principal retention is paramount to developing a quality workforce and providing quality instruction. Teacher turnover negatively impacts our ability to provide continuity and experienced staff in the classroom. Quality instruction is supported by staff members who consistently prepare, teach and assess students over time on state and nationally benchmarked standards as well as industry-validated career and technical education competencies. Reaching excellence in student achievement will require attracting and retaining excellent teachers and administrators using innovative and sound investment strategies.

9. NCLB. VASSP supports continuation of efforts by the Board of Education to seek waivers and additional flexibility to the NCLB Act.

10. Standards of Quality. VASSP supports and approves the State Board of Education’s reaffirmation of all prescribed revisions to the Standards of Quality. The Association draws the following to the Governor’s attention:

- Increasing the number of Assistant Principals from 600:1 to 400:1. The demands and responsibilities of APs have intensified based on the increasing complexity of the principal’s role as instructional leader and school manager and the increasing challenges such as those related to safety, crisis management and discipline. Changing the SOQ

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, Inc. is to support school principals and assistant principals in providing leadership to their schools and communities for the purpose of improving the education of Virginia’s youth.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, Inc. is to be the Commonwealth’s foremost authority on school leadership for Virginia’s youth.

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requirement from one full-time AP for every 600 students to one full-time AP for every 400 students addresses the discrepancy between SOQ requirements and actual staffing practices in middle and high schools. JLARC compared the number of AP positions in '99-00 with the number required by the SOQ and found that the number of AP positions was exceeded by 140.5%.

- Adding one full-time instructional position for each 1,000 students to serve as the reading specialist. Reading is fundamental to student progress in all grades. This revision item ties into the Governor's progressive literacy initiative to have all students reading on grade level by grade 3 and also will serve to help those students in middle level and high schools to improve their literacy skills in order to graduate on time and to be successful. VASSP will actively support early childhood intervention and prevention initiatives to achieve the reading on grade level goal, but must also advocate for the middle level and high school students already in the pipeline needing support to successfully reach graduation.

- Adding one mathematics teacher specialist per 1,000 students K-8. Using the 2003 TIMSS study data as a basis for reforms in mathematics education along with the most recent NCTM standards, VASSP will support initiatives to reform the mathematics curriculum. Specifically, one of the goals would be to increase the number of students successfully completing Algebra I by grade 8.

- Adding one data analyst/assessment coordinator per 1,000 students. There is a strong need for this staff position to coordinate testing and analysis of test data to help individual students move from competence to excellence. Currently guidance counselors, assistant principals and other administrative staff must take on these jobs in addition to their primary responsibilities. With Stanford 9, PSAT, Fall retests, senior early test dates, writing tests, regular test days, and retests, and analysis of that data, the reality is that building level test coordinators are busy nine of the ten months that school is in session.

11. Competence to Excellence. VASSP supports the Governor's Competence to Excellence resolve and pledges the state's assistance in making the Commonwealth #1 in the nation for the number of students who take advantage of AP (including virtual AP), IB, industry certification and dual enrollment opportunities. VASSP further supports recent funding proposals in the Governor's budget to increase the number of high school graduates who go on to achieve post-secondary degrees including funding for virtual Advance Placement courses, Project Graduation, and support for career and technical education.

12. 9th Grade Intervention. VASSP supports intervention to address ninth grade transition issues, specifically

the retention rate, alternative education, and assistance for teachers such as transition summer teams, and other opportunities for interaction among middle level and high school teachers.

13. Governor's Schools. VASSP supports expansion of the Governor's School concept for gifted students – noting that the Commonwealth has a unique model – by considering the addition of a CTE Governor's School for students gifted in the practical arts and also a Governor's School for Middle and High School Students. Currently, academic year Governor's schools are for high school students. A Governor's school for grades 7-12 students would be a different model for Virginia and provide additional articulation options.

14. Incentive Program. VASSP applauds the Governor's recognition and support of the Board of Education's VIP incentive program to encourage and recognize school accountability performance and competence to excellence.

15. Professional Development. VASSP supports collaboration between the Department of Education and professional education associations for the delivery of programs for professional development and believes that such activities are the most beneficial when educators have input into the process and are in an atmosphere that encourages interaction among peers.

16. At-Risk Programs. VASSP supports the Governor's pledge to maintain all at-risk funds aimed at our most vulnerable students. Every school division in the Commonwealth serves diverse and growing populations of at-risk students and offers programs based on local assessment of what their students need in order to perform on grade level. VASSP believes that support for these local programs is critical to success for all at-risk students and for the state's commitment to continue the pursuit of competence to excellence.

We thank our founders for their vision – a foundation upon which our Association has continued to grow in membership and influence. We honor their vision with a promise to future generations of principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia: VASSP, as the preeminent organization for middle level and high school leaders, will remain at the forefront in establishing standards for exemplary schools and leaders by fostering a greater understanding of the global marketplace, the effect of technology, and the effects of the information age on teaching and learning. Our annual meeting with the Governor is an important and cherished tradition.

Student Leadership



MIKE NEWMAN

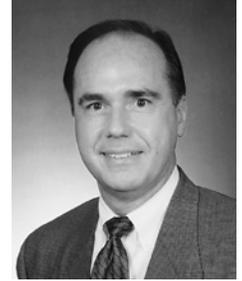
Principals, are your schools members of the Virginia Student Councils Association? The VSCA is the premier leadership learning organization for student leaders from public and private schools throughout the Commonwealth. VSCA provides learning experiences and opportunities to practice the citizenship skills necessary for effective participation in a democratic society. Many of us who work with state student leadership programs under the direction of secondary principals association were recently reminded that student councils were originally formed to serve as a laboratory for students to practice democratic principles.

"The development of any Student Council should be based upon a definite philosophy of democracy. It should truly be one of participation and sharing, a means through which students develop a belief in and an intelligent understanding and appreciation of our theory of democratic government and its processes. Here, certainly is an excellent opportunity for the school to be a laboratory of practice in democracy in which the school is the community of operation. It must be an essential part of the overall school program."
(NASSP Bulletin, October, 1944, p. 21.)"

Our VSCA - the oldest state student council association in America has a rich history of providing leadership development activities for students for over 100 years. As impressive and successful as VSCA is, the organization must continue to build its membership base needed to support schools. Many principals have overlooked joining the association, and I am asking every principal to

consider the matter of affiliation with the state. All schools should join VSCA. As a former school principal, I always appreciated the support of the student council and their desire to be involved in the school and larger community. A school's SCA can be a very effective leadership tool. One of the advantages of your school's membership in the VSCA is the multiple opportunities for the development of student leadership skills.

How does your student council function? What role do student leaders have in your school? Are your student leaders entrusted with opportunities to serve the school? How are they allowed to contribute? I pose these questions because principals can create and support opportunities for students to lead.

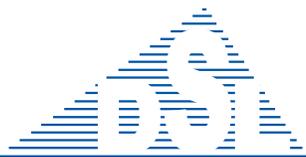


Mike Newman

Our VSCA - the oldest state student council association in America...

Student leaders, whether through service clubs, athletics, student council or other school affiliated organizations, can lead effectively with the support of their principal. I encourage you to look for ways to continue or to expand opportuni-

ties for students to lead in their schools and communities. The Virginia Student Councils Association (VSCA) is an excellent avenue for leadership development for students at elementary, middle and high school levels. The VSCA has long been involved in organizing leadership workshops that provide students with leadership skill building experiences. In addition, leadership is emphasized in the summer camps sponsored by VSCA and at the annual state convention. Is your school a member of the VSCA? If not, I encourage you to consider membership. I encourage you to provide the leadership development opportunities that your students can utilize as they grow as leaders. Membership applications are available online at www.vassp.org/dsl.html. If you as school principal have any questions about having your school join the state SCA, please call me. My direct line is 804.355.4263; my e-mail is cmnewman@vassp.org.



Department of Student Leadership
Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals

2007-2008 State Student Leadership Theme:

**Student Leadership
Began Here.**

VSCA: The Journey Continues!





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INSIDE...

- ◆ **New Board Members**
- ◆ **Board meets with Governor**
- ◆ **VASSP’s foundation launches Webinar**



CALENDAR

Additional events are added as confirmed. Please visit the VASSP Web site for the most up-to-date information - www.vapincipal.org.

March 4, 2008 — Richmond, VA
**High School Principal and Lead Teacher
Special Education Workshop**

March 5, 2008 — Richmond, VA
**Middle School Principal and Lead Teacher
Special Education Workshop**

March 10, 2008 — Richmond, VA
**VASSP Board of Directors &
VFEL Board of Trustees**

April 3-4, 2008 — Williamsburg, VA
Annual School Secretaries Conference

April 8, 2008 — Richmond, VA
**Student Handbook and Code of Student
Conduct Workshop**

April 25-27, 2008 — Richmond, VA
**Virginia Student Councils Association (VSCA)
82nd Annual State Convention**

May 3, 2008 — Staunton, VA
**Virginia Association of Honor Societies State
Conference, Mary Baldwin College**

May 14-15, 2008 — Richmond, VA
Breaking Ranks in the Middle (BRIM)

June 29-July 2, 2008 — Hot Springs, VA
**81st Annual Virginia Middle and High School
Principals Conference & Exposition**
Sponsored with the Virginia Department of Education