



## Proposed Legislative Priorities for the 2022 General Assembly

Legislative Topic	Charlottesville City School Board Position
<b>Top Four Priorities</b>	
Special Sales Tax and Needs for Reconfiguration	The division may need a special sales tax to accomplish the reconfiguration. Wyck Knox, Principal-in-Charge and Project Manager for VMDO. will share information to help guide the discussion regarding the needs of the school.
Additional support for timeliness of receipt for Central Registry	All new hires are required to have VSP fingerprint checks and Child Protective Services Background checks. Currently, the VSP check is returned quickly. However, the CPS check is taking weeks to receive which is delaying the start date and in some cases creating an opening if the new employee is not willing to wait for clearance.
Continued mitigation and resources for COVID	While case counts are somewhat volatile, it is important to have the support for schools for continued mitigation including masking, encouragement for vaccinations, funding for substitutes, etc.
<b>Budget and Funding</b>	
Salary increases	If the Governor's proposal for a 10% salary increase is approved, include funding for all positions and not base it on the SOQ positions.
<b>Educational Employment</b>	
Fact-Finding Panel for Grievances/Dismissals	The Charlottesville City School Board supports a return to the pre 2013 legislation regarding the grievance/dismissal procedure that would allow an option for school boards to utilize a three-member Fact-Finding Panel or a hearing officer. As a result of the 2013 General Assembly, a hearing officer must be appointed for all grievance/dismissal proceedings.



## 2022 VSBA Legislative Priorities

### About the Virginia School Boards Association

The Virginia School Boards Association is a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through leadership, advocacy, and services.

### Local Control

- VSBA opposes any attempts to divest local school boards of their constitutional authority to supervise schools. The VSBA further opposes any efforts that interfere with the day-to-day activities of school boards in performing their constitutional responsibilities.

### Funding and Budget

Article VIII of the Virginia Constitution establishes public education as a shared responsibility. School Boards work in partnership with the Virginia General Assembly, Virginia Board of Education, and local appropriating bodies to provide education in the Commonwealth. Past changes to state funding for education widened existing gaps between the actual costs of services at the local level and the state's reimbursement for the provision of these services.

- Fiscal Year 2021 budget revenue projections indicate the likelihood of a significant budget surplus. After ten plus years of the SOQ Support Staff Position Cap, VSBA supports the overdue repeal of the cap through the dedication of budget surplus revenues to fund the state's share of SOQ Support Staff Positions.
- VSBA supports local flexibility for implementing all mandates and programs passed by the General Assembly. Furthermore, VSBA supports local flexibility with revenue appropriated by the state to establish programs that address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- VSBA supports full funding of all mandates and programs passed by the General Assembly. Partial funding or the absence of funding for mandates and programs places additional burden on local school divisions.
- VSBA supports measures to hold school divisions harmless from funding loss due to enrollment decline resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Charter Schools

VSBA believes that all public schools should be freed from regulations impeding education reform. The power to operate, maintain and supervise public schools in Virginia is within the exclusive jurisdiction of local school boards and is granted to them by the Constitution and the Code of Virginia.

- VSBA supports the existing charter school law, which allows local school boards to establish such schools/programs and opposes any attempt to remove local school board authority from this process.

### School Choice

VSBA believes that all public schools should provide a quality education for each student and that in meeting local educational needs, locally developed policies and program options which give parents the opportunity to select schools or programs for their children should be considered among a variety of possible educational strategies.

- The VSBA opposes federal or state efforts to mandate school choice, including efforts to divert or condition funding from existing federal and state programs.

## School Modernization

The Commonwealth of Virginia must recognize the impending crisis in school construction and infrastructure needs and implement a new strategy to assist localities in funding their school capital needs. The State's objective should be to provide revenue to fund at least 55 percent of localities' school construction needs over the next five years without reducing or modifying other sources of State aid to education.

- VSBA supports efforts to amend §58.1-605.1 of the Code of Virginia to include all cities and counties among those localities authorized to impose an additional local sales and use tax up to one percent, as determined by the governing body, if initiated by a resolution of the local governing body and approved by voters. Revenue from the tax would be used solely for capital projects for new construction or major renovation of schools.
- The VSBA urges the Virginia General Assembly and the U.S. Congress to provide substantial and sustained funding to finance local school construction, renovation, and debt service costs with disbursements to local school boards.

## Broadband Connectivity

The use of the internet is a necessity for providing each student with a quality education. Because access to the internet is unavailable or inadequate in parts of the Commonwealth—VSBA supports policies that provide technologies that allow internet data to be transmitted at high speeds—as universally as possible.

## Teacher Shortages

Effective teachers are essential to providing a high-quality education as required in the constitution of Virginia. The recruitment and retention of teachers in the face of critical teacher shortages across regions and subject areas is essential to maintaining education quality.

- VSBA supports increased funding for teacher compensation.
- VSBA supports increased funding for the Virginia Teacher Scholarship Loan Program to encourage individuals to enter the teaching profession in shortage areas and to remain in Virginia.
- VSBA supports alternative entry routes into the teaching profession to provide localities flexibility in hiring qualified persons who have not formally prepared for teaching careers.
- VSBA supports the provision of individual waivers by the Virginia Board of Education from specific licensure requirements that prohibit local school divisions from retaining otherwise qualified personnel who have demonstrated proficiency in the classroom and are teaching a critical shortage area.
- VSBA supports minority recruitment and promotional practices, including college scholarships for minority students entering the teaching profession.

## School Safety

Students have a right to, and school divisions have a responsibility to ensure a teaching/learning environment that is safe and free of disruption. There are incidents involving weapons, assaults and threats at schools which require interventions in addition to those school personnel are able and authorized to provide.

- The VSBA supports state government, local communities, law enforcement agencies, and school cooperation to provide appropriate prevention and intervention programs that are effective in addressing violence, and the precursors to violence, in schools and their communities.
- The VSBA supports the authority of local school boards to prohibit guns at all school-related functions/events regardless of setting.
- The VSBA supports the existing authority of local school boards to adopt firearm safety curriculum; and opposes any attempt to mandate a state-wide firearm safety curriculum upon local school divisions.
- The VSBA supports the authority of local school boards in deciding whether to enter into Memorandums of Understanding with local law enforcement agencies to establish a School Resource Officer program in their divisions.
- The VSBA urges the General Assembly to:

- Support local school division efforts to achieve strong, fair, and consistent disciplinary expectations and applications to all students.
- Appropriate sufficient funds to the School Resource Officer Grants Program so that each school board may choose whether to employ uniformed officers in their schools, as well as sufficient funds for local school boards to use at their discretion in ensuring safe and respectful school environments through effective programs such as peer mediation, conflict resolution, character education, and other proactive initiatives appropriate for individual school communities.
- Pass legislation which would afford greater protection to students, school employees, and volunteers who are exposed to bodily fluids which put them at risk of dangerous infectious diseases.