

Step 1: Talking Points Where VSBA & VASS Agree

Both emphasize:

- **Local Control:** School boards must retain the authority to run schools, implement mandates, and decide on collective bargaining agreements.
 - **Funding:** The State should fully fund mandates, SOQ positions, and provide flexibility in spending.
 - **Teacher Shortage:** Increase salaries, expand alternative licensure, and offer incentives (loan forgiveness, housing, childcare).
 - **Student Mental Health:** Expand funding and flexibility to hire counselors and mental health staff.
 - **School Facilities:** Invest in modernization and provide localities with additional revenue tools.
 - **Assessment/Accountability:** Emphasize student growth and mastery equally, allow flexibility in SOL use and alternatives.
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Step 2: Substantive Differences / Potential Conflicts

- **Collective Bargaining:**
 - VASS: Local boards should decide.
 - VSBA: Strongly opposes weakening permissive status or forcing boards to bargain.
- **School Choice:**
 - VSBA: Explicitly opposes school choice mandates and diversion of funds.
 - VASS: Silent on this issue.
- **Funding Details:**

- VASS: Specific reforms (3-year LCI average, consolidate At-Risk Add-On, facilities staff costs, lottery/casino funds for schools).
 - VSBA: Broad funding support, less technical detail.
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Step 3: Condensed Draft Talking Points

1. Fund What the State Requires

If the state mandates something, it should pay for it. Local boards need flexibility to use funds in ways that meet their students' needs.

2. Keep Decisions Local

Local school boards know their communities best. They should maintain control over operations, collective bargaining, and the implementation of new laws.

3. Pay and Support Teachers

Raise teacher pay above the national average, make licenses easier to obtain, and provide assistance with student loans, childcare, and housing so we can retain great teachers.

4. Invest in Student Wellness

Increase funding for counselors and mental health providers. Every school needs resources to support the emotional and physical well-being of students.

5. Modernize Schools

Virginia must invest in new and renovated school buildings. Give localities more tools to raise funds for construction and modernization.

6. Make Funding Fair

Update state formulas to reflect real costs. Use a three-year average for local wealth measures and cover the costs of central office and facilities staff.

7. Smarter Testing and Accountability

Balance mastery with student growth. Allow flexibility in SOL testing, alternative assessments for students with special needs, and earlier test dates.

8. Expand College and Career Paths

Support dual enrollment, CTE programs, and work-based learning with more state funding so every student can graduate ready for college or a career.