

## Fall 2025 VSBA Legislative Talking Points

### About the Virginia School Boards Association

The Virginia School Boards Association is a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards that promotes excellence in public education through leadership, advocacy, and services. VSBA promotes the quality of education through services to member local school boards. All legislative position statements of the VSBA are approved annually by the Delegate Assembly of the Association at the Annual Convention in November.

We ask that members of the Virginia General Assembly **support**:

- The constitutional authority of local school boards, which grants them the responsibility to operate public schools in the Commonwealth. Recognizing the diversity of communities across Virginia, we ask that the General Assembly avoid one-size prescriptive legislative programs and provide local school boards with flexibility in implementing legislation passed during the session.
- The continued funding of the state's share of education support positions defined in the Standards of Quality. We thank the General Assembly for the funding and progress that was made on this issue during the 2025 session and encourage equal or greater funding for SOQ support positions in the next biennium.
- Enhancing instructional content, professional development, assessment models, and remediation strategies designed to support all students and increase achievement levels in public schools across the Commonwealth.
- Additional state funding for school-based mental health services for students including flexible dollars to hire additional school counselors and mental health service providers.
- Investments in school infrastructure and modernization in the biennial budget. We also ask the General Assembly to provide additional revenue enhancing options for localities to utilize in the modernization of school facilities. We thank the Governor and the General Assembly for the investment in school infrastructure and modernization appropriated during the 2025 session.

- Policies that allow local school divisions to recruit and retain individuals in crucial positions that are essential to the daily operations of public schools. We also ask the General Assembly to support legislation that permits alternative entry routes into the teaching profession that provides localities flexibility in hiring qualified people who have not formally prepared for teaching careers.
- Changes in the School Performance Framework adopted by the Virginia Board of Education to weigh student growth and student mastery equally in Elementary and Middle School.

We ask that members of the Virginia General Assembly **oppose**:

- Mandates on local school boards without providing necessary funds to implement the desired outcome of the legislation. Further, we ask the General Assembly to oppose any legislation that interferes with the day-to-day activities of school boards in performing their constitutional responsibilities.
- Legislation that seeks to change the current permissive status afforded to school boards in deciding whether to enter into collective bargaining agreements. Local control of this decision process works best and protects the school boards constitutional authority to govern their school divisions.
- Legislation that attempts to alter the composition or method of selection of school boards in the Commonwealth.
- Efforts to mandate school choice, including the diversion of funding from existing federal and state programs that benefit public schools.

The VSBA Executive Director and lobbyists are in daily contact discussing proposed legislation and the VSBA Legislative Positions that drive the Association's lobbying efforts, including the decision to send action alerts to the membership. The Association's lobbying efforts are based on positions contained in the VSBA Legislative Positions Handbook that is approved each year by the VSBA Delegate Assembly. Local school boards are not bound to this handbook and can adopt local positions on legislation and policy.