

VASCD's Advocacy Committee provides leadership for policy and influence efforts in Virginia and the nation. Our advocacy work is both proactive and responsive, and is carefully aligned with VASCD's mission and goals.

The Committee promotes policies that are student-centered, address the needs of the whole child, and support excellence in teaching, learning and leadership.



2019 VASCD ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

Priority: Outstanding Teachers for Virginia's Students

Honoring the Profession and Professionals through "Autonomy with Integrity"

Rationale: Recruiting and retaining the very best teachers requires coordinated efforts among policy makers and the education community. While we appreciate the recent attention to Virginia's teacher shortage, we urge decision makers to align their actions with evidence regarding the factors that actually influence teachers' decisions to accept and stay in their positions.

Principles:

- Teachers deserve compensation that allows them to support themselves and their families while living in the communities in which they work. Changes in VRS benefits have removed a significant incentive to accept the low salary that teaching offers in Virginia.
- An environment in which teachers are free to teach the Standards in innovative and creative ways is a factor in teacher recruitment and retention.
- Student needs vary widely and change constantly. Educators need greater flexibility to make decisions in the interests of students while aligning their teaching with the Standards of Learning.
- Investments in high-quality professional learning as well as opportunities for educators to collaborate and innovate will improve practice more effectively than one-size-fits-all directives.

Priority: Modernizing Virginia's Assessment System

Providing Adequate Accountability Data While Supporting Today's Student Learning Goals

Rationale: Virginia's Profile of a Graduate raises expectations for student learning by requiring demonstration of both academic knowledge and a broader range of skills necessary for success in the workplace and community (Virginia's Five Cs). In order to measure these objectives, multiple types of assessments are essential.

A more modern assessment system reduces reliance on one type of test that measures one type of learning, and combines multiple measures across K-12 so that (1) each type of assessment is administered in the place where it is most effective and informative, and (2) the overall "assessment load" is constrained so that it complements rather than interferes with teaching and learning.

Principles:

- Virginia's assessment system should be revised to include a balance of achievement, performance, and growth measures over the course of students' K-12 experience, reflecting an emphasis on future-ready skills.
- The statewide assessment system should yield adequate data for accountability purposes without supplanting excessive instructional time.
- While maintaining validity and reliability, the system should be modernized to incorporate methodologies such as on-demand testing and interdisciplinary assessments.