



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: April 6, 2018
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **91st Annual Virginia Middle and High School Principals Conference & Exposition – June 24-27, 2018 (School Law Clinic and Lead Evaluators Certification Workshop June 24, 2018)**

Virginia's only statewide conference for middle level and high school principals is the Annual Virginia Middle and High School Principals Conference & Exposition. This will be the 91st consecutive year the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals (VASSP) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) have collaborated to develop and enhance middle level and high school administrators' leadership skills, increase their understanding of current educational issues, and expand their knowledge base for success. The event will be held June 24-27, 2018, at The Omni Homestead, 1766 Homestead Drive, Hot Springs, VA 24445. A cordial invitation is extended to principals, assistant principals, division superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors of instruction, supervisors, college/university personnel, and administrators of nonpublic middle and high schools to attend.

The theme for this year's State Conference is "**Principal Leadership – Discover '19.**" It supports a reality that education leaders have known for decades that powerful principal leadership is key to increased student achievement. Research continues to validate this understanding, confirming that principals are responsible for both building and keeping a positive and productive school culture. Conferees will connect with a professional community of leaders, hear keynotes featuring the Superintendent of Public Instruction and other seasoned leaders who have faced challenges like the ones principals face now, and develop strategies and ideas to build on strengths and weaknesses to prepare for 2019.

There will be an emphasis on Performance-Based Assessment, Profile of a Virginia School Graduate and the continued innovative changes with the Standards of Learning. Among the topics included are understanding the importance of high instructional quality and expectations, translating data into action, developing effective teams, leading a change effort, and creating meaningful engagement with community and external partners. Although the Commonwealth has policies, metrics, and rubrics in place, school principals and assistant principals need to not only be comfortable in their knowledge of this information, but also be able to implement them effectively, synergistically, and strategically. It is important that school principals set school expectations that incorporate national, state, and local mandates in guiding student achievement, requiring quality instructional delivery, and pursuing leadership goals for success. This State Conference addresses state mandates important to school administrators.

The **Title II, Part A – Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting funds** may be used to support attendance at this event. The State Conference program addresses the key principles of professional development for principals. Attending the conference will provide participants opportunities to explore their leadership strengths and how they can be enhanced to generate a school culture of performance success.

The **DOE Colloquium** will address recent state mandates and the school leadership expectations of principals. In addition, the Colloquium will focus on resources and implementation strategies that have been successfully used in schools to improve instruction in the core curriculum areas—mathematics, science, English, and history/social science.

The *Professional Practices Symposium* will focus on exemplary practices that excel in content delivery for students in today's schools. The fast-paced learning environment necessitated by the global economy requires a competitive edge. Principals must understand, appreciate, and implement effective performance systems.

The *Lead Evaluators Certification Workshop* offered by AdvancED and the *School Law Clinic* are preconference activities and will be held on Sunday, June 24, 2018. **Learning Labs** and **Roundtable Discussions** will include pertinent topics identified in the recent statewide *2018 Middle Level and High School Principals Needs Assessment* which include nine (9) strands: 1) School Leadership, Administration, and Management; 2) SOL Innovation/Curriculum and Instruction/Remediation; 3) SOA/Accountability; 4) ESSA/AMO/Teacher Quality & Evaluation/LEP/Special Education; 5) Assessment and Data Analysis; 6) Instructional Technology; 7) Student Services and Programs (e.g., school safety, discipline, dropout prevention, anti-bullying); 8) Personal (e.g., stress management, time management, health and fitness awareness); and 9) Educational Law and Policy.

The 2018 State Conference will officially begin with an opening general session at 10 a.m. on Monday, June 25, 2018. Registration and hotel accommodation forms, as well as the conference at-a-glance preliminary schedule, are available on the VASSP website at www.vassp.org/annual-conference/ ➡. The detailed announcement about the general session speakers, workshop presenters, topics, etc., will be sent via a VASSP email blast to principals and division superintendents, and will be posted on the Association's website.

The Omni Homestead will house all the conference programs. To take advantage of EARLY REGISTRATION, the registration form must be completed and returned by **May 25, 2018**, to State Conference, VASSP, 4909 Cutshaw Avenue, Richmond, VA 23230.

Hotel accommodations are available on a first-come, first-serve basis and we encourage you to return the accommodations application form to the hotel as soon as possible. All rooms not confirmed with a reservation by May 25, 2018, will be released.

The hotel accommodation form is to be sent via U.S. Mail directly to The Omni Homestead. Only the official accommodation form will be accepted by the hotel. As in past years, the hotel will not accept telephone requests for room reservations (this includes facsimile), written letters, online, or in-person requests. This procedure helps to assure some degree of fairness so that everyone has an opportunity to receive registration information and respond in a timely fashion.

We look forward to seeing you in June. If you have questions about the conference or desire additional information, please visit the VASSP website at www.vassp.org ➡ or call the Association at (804) 355-2777.

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