Superintendent’s Memo #091-20


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: April 10, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: 93rd Annual Virginia Middle and High School Principals Conference & Exposition – June 23-26, 2020 (School Law Clinic June 23, 2020)**

While recognizing the challenges of the current health crisis, the recent Executive Orders of the Governor, and the shortened 19-20 academic year, educators across the Commonwealth may already be planning and preparing for the next academic year. Virginia’s only statewide conference for middle level and high school principals is the Annual Virginia Middle and High School Principals Conference & Exposition. For the past 92 years, the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals (VASSP) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) – and now with the Virginia Foundation for Educational Leadership (VFEL) – 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. Previously distributed publicity announced that the event is scheduled for June 23-26, 2020, at Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa / Short Pump, 12042 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23233. VASSP, VFEL, and VDOE are hopeful this event will take place as scheduled, and already have over 200 participants pre-registered. If there are changes to the conference schedule as the June dates approach, reliance on government guidance will inform changes or postponement decisions, and a notification will be sent out accordingly.

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 ’21.”**

Principals will be able to reflect on the past year, focus on their growth for the year ahead, build upon their professional community, and discover solutions so they can provide the best possible leadership for those who need it most — their staff and students. Conferees will have the opportunity to connect with a professional community of leaders, hear keynotes featuring the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and learn from other leading state and national experts. The focus of the conference is to prepare principals for the opening of schools in these challenging circumstances.

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 ***School Law Clinic*** is a preconference activity that will be held on Tuesday, June 23, 2020. Beginning Wednesday, June 24, 2020, **Learning Labs** and **Roundtable Discussions** will include pertinent topics identified in the recent statewide *2020 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/AMOT/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 2020 State Conference will officially begin with an opening general session at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 24, 2020. A 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 [VASSP Annual Summer Conference webpage](https://www.vassp.org/VASSP/meeting-conferences/vassp-annual-conference/) includes a [registration form (PDF)](https://www.vassp.org/VASSP/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2020-Early-Registration.pdf), with the registration form also available [online](https://www.vassp.org/VASSP/2019-principals-conference-registration), a [hotel accommodation form (PDF)](https://www.vassp.org/VASSP/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2020-Hotel-Accommodations-Form-VASSP-VDOE-VFEL-Conference.pdf), with the hotel accommodation form also available [online](https://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/R/RICWSHF-VASSP6-20200622/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG), and the [conference at-a-glance](https://www.vassp.org/VASSP/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Conference-at-a-Glance-2020.pdf) prelimina[ry schedule (PDF)](https://www.vassp.org/VASSP/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-Exhibitor-Full-Packet-1.pdf).

Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa / Short Pump will house all the conference programs. To take advantage of EARLY REGISTRATION, the registration form must be completed and returned by **May 25, 2020,** 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 make your hotel accommodations as soon as possible. All rooms not confirmed with a reservation by May 25, 2020, will be released.

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

JFL/JN/pk