



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
**Department of Education**

February 26, 2016

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**SUBJECT: National School Social Work Week**  
**(March 6-12, 2016)**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) joins the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA), the American Council of School Social Work (ACSSW) and the National Association of Social Work (NASW) in celebrating School Social Work Week, March 6-12, 2016. School social workers provide mental health services in schools and have specialized training to meet students' social-emotional needs. They serve as the mental health providers for students and offer counseling services to students and their families.

School social workers serve a vital role in supporting schools and school divisions in striving to achieve excellence in education for all students by promoting conditions for learning across home, school and community settings. As part of the education team, school social workers address a wide range of issues that impede students' learning, including bullying, attendance, truancy, drug use and behavioral problems. The responsibilities of school social workers also include providing crisis intervention, conflict resolution and staff support, and connecting students with community services.

School social workers are needed in every school to create fully supportive environments for learning to take place. For many students and families, school social workers are vital in navigating the bureaucracy of school systems and accessing social resources that foster an environment conducive to student success.

Join VDOE in celebrating School Social Work Week and take a moment to recognize and support school social workers. For additional information contact SSWAA at [www.sswaa.org](http://www.sswaa.org), ACSSW at [www.acssw.org](http://www.acssw.org), or NASW at [www.socialworkers.org](http://www.socialworkers.org). Questions regarding school social work services may be directed to Dr. Vivian Stith-Williams, school social worker specialist, via e-mail at [Vivian.Stith-Williams@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Vivian.Stith-Williams@doe.virginia.gov); telephone (804)225-4543.

SRS/VSW