



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

February 27, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: National School Social Work Week March 2-6, 2015

The Virginia Department of Education joins the Virginia Association of Visiting Teachers and School Social Workers (VT/SSW) and the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA) in celebrating School Social Work Week, March 2-6, 2015. 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.

School social workers provide an ecological holistic approach to ensuring student success. They assist children and families by examining those factors in the home, school and/or community that are impacting a student's educational success and then assist in reducing those barriers to learning. 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.

School social workers assist teachers and other staff members in understanding a student's cultural and familial factors and help staff members meet the desired educational outcomes of diverse learners. They assist teachers by providing or directing educators to appropriate resources and by ensuring that they understand their role in the special education process. School social workers/visiting teachers work collaboratively with school personnel and parents to address attendance and truancy issues.

Join me in celebrating School Social Work Week and take a moment to acknowledge your school social workers. For additional information contact VT/SSW at www.vavtssw.org or SSWAA at www.sswaa.org. Questions regarding school social work services may be directed to Dr. Vivian Stith-Williams, school social work specialist, by e-mail at Vivian.Stith-Williams@doe.virginia.gov; telephone (804) 225-4543.

SRS/VSW/rt