



Rivanna Ridge Professional Building
200 Hansen Road, Suite 2
Charlottesville, VA 22911

News Release

For Immediate Release

October 1, 2024

Contact

Gina Patterson, executive director
434-295-8722 or gina@vsba.org

Virginia School Boards Association Kicks Off Bullying Prevention Month

Charlottesville, VA – The Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) is proud to announce the start of VSBA Bullying Prevention Month this October. VSBA Bullying Prevention Month is a dedicated effort to foster safe and supportive learning environments across the Commonwealth. This initiative underscores the commitment of educational leaders to address and prevent bullying in schools, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive.

Childhood bullying is a significant problem nationwide, with far-reaching consequences including school absenteeism, mental and physical stress, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and, in extreme cases, school violence. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that bullying significantly increases the risk of depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties, lower academic achievement, and dropping out of school.

“Bullying prevention isn’t just an initiative; it’s a long-term commitment to the safety and emotional well-being of every student in Virginia,” said Gina Patterson, executive director of the VSBA. “This month, we take bold steps to ensure our schools are places of kindness and understanding.”

The VSBA has created the Bullying Prevention Month Toolkit to provide school divisions with a comprehensive set of resources, strategies, and materials designed to help schools combat bullying. Additionally, the VSBA website provides links to information and statistics on bullying in schools, empowering school board members and educators with the knowledge they need to make well-informed decisions.

VSBA President Dr. Cardell Patillo also emphasized the importance of this initiative in a Public Service Announcement (PSA), recognizing the critical role that school board members play in safeguarding the well-being of students across Virginia.

“School board members are the champions of our students’ safety and success,” stated Dr. Cardell Patillo, VSBA president. “By leading the charge in bullying prevention, we set the tone for a school culture where every child feels protected, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential.”

The 2024 VSBA Bullying Prevention Month Toolkit can be accessed on the VSBA website, and additional resources are available to support school divisions in their efforts to prevent bullying and promote a positive school climate.

About the Virginia School Boards Association

The Virginia School Boards Association, a voluntary, nonpartisan organization of Virginia school boards, promotes excellence in public education through advocacy, training, and services. The Association offers conferences, information, training, and counseling designed to meet the needs of the Commonwealth’s educational leaders.

###