VASSP Director of Government Relations

Elizabeth "Bet" Neale has been VASSP's director of government relations and lead lobbyist since 2000. She is VASSP's registered lobbyist at the General Assembly. When not in session, Bet attends all pertinent legislative committee and subcommittee meetings. In addition, she attends the monthly meetings of the State Board of Education.

The Virginia General Assembly is the legislative body of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the oldest continuous law-making body in the New World, established on July 30, 1619. The General Assembly is a bicameral body consisting of a lower house, the Virginia House of Delegates, with 100 members, and an upper house, the Senate of Virginia, with 40 members. The state assembly meets for 60 calendar days ("long session") in even years and 30 days ("short session") in odd numbered years, which has traditionally been extended to 45 calendar days. The 2020 General Assembly Session convenes January 8 and adjourns March 7.

Advocacy is an essential component of a professional association’s ability to meet its mission. Professional associations have a responsibility to provide needed information to legislators and other policymakers on matters critical to education issues.

As Virginia’s leading advocate for middle and high school leaders, it is VASSP’s duty to bring the issues of the principalship to members of the General Assembly, State Board of Education, Virginia Department of Education, Governor’s Office, and state and national news media. VASSP gives school leaders the information and resources they need to become effective advocates for their schools, their staff, and their students. Working together, VASSP and NASSP help school leaders play a vital role in crafting laws and policies that support the achievement and success of every student. It is critical that these state and local decisions are informed by the experience and expertise of practicing school principals and assistant principals.
If you are interested in becoming more involved in public school education advocacy issues, consider joining VASSP’s Virginia Education Advocacy Network. Please complete and submit the form linked below.