

## **VIRGINIA ELECTIONS 2017**

### **VPEC Position on Public Education Public Policy/Advocacy Agenda 2017**

In 2017 Virginia's voters will have the opportunity to elect all 100 members of the Virginia House of Delegates AND three statewide officers: Governor, Lt Governor, and Attorney General. Some candidates will be selected in "firehouse" primaries in their districts; others will be selected in primary elections on June 13<sup>th</sup>. All statewide candidates will be selected in the June primary. Check with your local election registrar (<http://www.elections.virginia.gov/>) for information on the primary.

#### **Use the VCA Public Policy/Advocacy Agenda 2017 and the Virginia Public Education Coalition's Position Statement**

Candidates are now holding town hall meetings and attending other forums where they state their positions and also seek information from the participants. That is where you come in. Two documents can help with your advocacy. These are the VCA Public Policy/Advocacy Agenda 2017 and the Virginia Public Education Coalition's Position Statement.

Our public policy agenda was created last year using multiple association members' input. Use it to educate the candidates on:

- The need for increased numbers of qualified school counselors to help students stay mentally and physically healthy and be well prepared for success in school and careers.
- The need for increasing access to individuals in need of counseling services for mental health and substance use disorder.
- The need to make certain that all Virginians have access to health care services.
- The need to support evidence-based alternatives to youth incarceration.

The Virginia Public Education Coalition's position on public education can be used to guide questions on public education in general as well as give information about areas of importance to educators, including school counselors. The themes that cut through the statement reflect:

- The need for adequate resourcing of public education, including school counselors.
- The emphasis on preparing graduates to think critically and be ready for careers and/or post-secondary education. Talk about the role that school counselors play in helping to prepare graduates.

Thank you in advance for your advocacy. Don't hesitate to report your encounters to Becky Bowers-Lanier, VCA advocacy consultant, at [becky@B2Lconsulting.com](mailto:becky@B2Lconsulting.com).