



# VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**      November 12, 2013

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## **Mathews County Next Stop on Board President's Listening Tour *Itinerary Includes Tour of Gloucester Elementary School***

Virginia Board of Education President David M. Foster continues his listening tour of state educational regions November 14-15 with a visit to Region 3, which comprises 17 school divisions in the Fredericksburg area, Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. The tour is designed to provide an opportunity for parents, teachers, local school board members, administrators and interested citizens across the state to express their views on issues facing the commonwealth's public schools.

Foster and board Vice President Betsy Beamer will host an education issues forum on Thursday beginning at 6 p.m. in the multipurpose room of Thomas Hunter Middle School in Mathews. The forum, scheduled to last two hours, will begin with a brief presentation by Foster on the Board of Education's constitutional and statutory responsibilities and its goals for the commonwealth's public schools.

"I look forward to hearing people's thoughts on reforms the board has made to the SOL testing program in recent years, the shift to college- and career-ready standards for those graduating from our public schools, and other major issues before us," Foster said. "We are also interested in hearing views and concerns related to the A-F grading system that is to be implemented as a result of the legislation approved by the 2013 General Assembly. The board expects to take action on the proposed grading formula at its November 21<sup>st</sup> meeting."

On Friday morning, Gloucester County Superintendent Ben Kiser will accompany Foster and Beamer on a 9:15 a.m. tour of Botetourt Elementary School led by Principal Bambi Thompson.

Region 3 includes Caroline, Essex, Gloucester, King George, King William, King and Queen, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford and Westmoreland counties as well as Colonial Beach, Fredericksburg and West Point.

Foster intends to visit all eight of Virginia's educational administrative regions by the end of the year. Since March, he has visited Region 2 (Tidewater), Region 4 (Northern), Region 5 (Shenandoah Valley), Region 6 (Western), Region 7 (Southwest) and Region 8 (Southside).

On December 12, Foster's listening tour will conclude in Region 1 (Richmond and Petersburg areas) from 6-8 p.m. at Colonial Heights High School in Colonial Heights, followed by a school visit the next day.

The Constitution of Virginia vests the Board of Education with primary responsibility for setting policies for the commonwealth's public schools, subject only to the authority of the General Assembly. This includes establishing curriculum and accountability standards for schools and licensure requirements for teachers, principals and other educators.

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