



VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION NEWS

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Harrisonburg Next Stop on Board President's Listening Tour *Itinerary Includes Tours of Two Schools*

Virginia Board of Education President David M. Foster continues his listening tour of state educational regions October 17-18 with a visit to Region 5, which comprises 19 school divisions in the Shenandoah Valley, Blue Ridge Mountains and Piedmont. 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 fellow board member Diane Atkinson will host an education issues forum on Thursday beginning at 6 p.m. in the auditorium of Skyline Middle School in Harrisonburg. 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.

"As with past visits across the state, I look forward to hearing citizens' 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. "I am also interested in hearing views and concerns related to the A-F grading system that the board will be considering later this month as a result of the legislation approved by the 2013 General Assembly."

On Friday morning, Harrisonburg Superintendent Scott Kizner will accompany Foster and Atkinson on an 8 a.m. tour of Skyline Middle School led by Principal Joe Glick and a 9:30 a.m. visit to Smithland Elementary School led by Principal Gary Painter.

Region 5 includes Albemarle, Amherst, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Campbell, Fluvanna, Greene, Highland, Louisa, Nelson, Rockbridge and Rockingham counties as well as Buena Vista, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Lynchburg, Staunton and Waynesboro.

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 6 (Western), Region 7 (Southwest) and Region 8 (Southside).

On November 14, Foster's listening tour will be held in Region 3 (Fredericksburg area, Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula) from 6-8 p.m. at Thomas Hunter Middle School in Mathews County.

Details of the last stop on the tour — Region 1 (Richmond and Petersburg areas) — have not been determined, but will be available on the Virginia Department of Education website in [the public meetings section](#) when they become available.

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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