

Dear VASS Nominating Committee,

The superintendency in Virginia and across the country is at a pivotal moment. The pandemic, coupled with economic, political and social dynamics has thrust public education issues into the national discourse and placed school superintendents into hyper-political decision making around issues of health, safety and equity with minimal federal or state guidance. The role of the school superintendent has fundamentally changed in response to these uncertain times and that change must be met with a response that ensures the success of the current and future leaders who inhabit those positions.

VASS is well positioned to amplify its voice and advocacy to support both superintendents and public education in Virginia. It has 100% membership from school superintendents in Virginia to the association. It has strong regional and committee structures that bring forth member voice and expertise to its decision-making processes. It also has authored a strong Blueprint for Equity that provides a vision for Virginia education in the 21st century. It is a well-respected association across the Commonwealth.

I believe VASS still has untapped potential to be an even greater advocate for the needs of students and school divisions in Virginia. I believe that VASS must aspire to be a “First Call” organization. We must continue to be the “First Call” from our superintendent colleagues when they are experiencing challenges and need our support.

We must also strive to become the “First Call” organization from our state General Assembly representatives and VDOE leaders. Our state education policy makers need to consult superintendents first before moving forward on any key educational initiative. This can happen by giving our superintendents the tools, information and resources to be effective advocates within their school communities. One example is taking former Chesapeake Superintendent Jim Roberts’ recent work on identifying each district’s financial impact from the support cap and providing it directly to each school district so that superintendents can share their narrative school district by school district.

This can also happen by enhancing our collaborations with professional associations who have a vested interest in public education such as VSBA, VEA, Virginia PTSA, and the Virginia Chamber of Commerce so we become their “First Call” organization as well. The recent Secretary of Education called these type of meetings during his tenure. We can and should create space to hold and facilitate these meetings among these organizations ourselves. Through this “First Call” vision, VASS can be the definitive voice for public education in Virginia.

I seek this position because I am a life-long Virginian and a proud product of Virginia public schools. I have a deep commitment and belief in Virginia public education and what it can do for all kids. I have a deep knowledge of Virginia public education and the needs of superintendents based on my experiences leading two very different school districts. I am a relationship builder and collaborative educational leader who has built positive results for students. I brought the Lynchburg community together around the building of a new high school in a historically underserved area of the city and also around greater religious and racial equity while dramatically increasing student achievement. I brought the Fairfax community together through historic full funding of our budget prior to the pandemic and through a

return to school task force that guided our return to school work and a medical task force that now guides our vaccination and testing work.

I believe my VASS leadership experience, my successful Superintendent experience in two very different Virginia districts and my personal leadership qualities of integrity, humility, professionalism, and advocacy make me a candidate for your consideration in this VASS Executive Director position.

My professional references include the school board chairs from my first year in Lynchburg and in Fairfax. They are Charlie White, Chairman, Petty John, Wood & White, Inc., cwhite@pwandw.com, 434-845-1266 and Janie Strauss, Janie.k.strauss@gmail.com, 703-593-7100.

I look forward to additional opportunities for discussion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Brabrand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" and last name "Brabrand" clearly distinguishable.

Scott Brabrand