



Virginia Middle School Association Newsletter

DECEMBER 2013

Liz Phillips, Editor

Email: editor.vmsa.newsletter@gmail.com

Virginia's Best Middle School-Focused Conference a HUGE Success!

With over 150 registrants in attendance at the 2013 VMSA Annual Conference, it goes without saying that the VMSA board members were thrilled to facilitate the collaborative and inspirational experiences of attendees. With teachers, principals, and school board office administrators working together at the conference to inspire everyone to celebrate the middle school concept in the Commonwealth of Virginia, it is hoped that the attendance next year will not only include new people, but also draw those who have attended in the past. The January issue of the VMSA Newsletter will feature Schools to Watch and Teacher recognitions as well as news from regional directors and candidats from the conference.

Debbie Silver Inspires Conference Attendees With TWO Amazing Talks!

Teaching certainly has changed a lot since in the past thirty years. It's change tremendously in the last five! When Debbie Silver shared serious stories about her first years as a classroom teacher, she laced the anecdotes with plenty of humor so conference attendees laughed while taking her message to heart. No matter what, you have to teach with a lot of heart, teach what students need to know about themselves and the world around them. She reminded educators that they are never alone and that support can be as close as the nearest child, and often as close as the nearest student. The most memorable lessons to a child are the ones where the get hands-on experience or get sincere coaching of a caring teacher that is aimed at success.



Conference Break-Out Sessions Popular With Standing Room Only!

It's all in a day, and attendees picked which break-out sessions to attend. There were roundtable presentations by several Schools to Watch groups from all over the Commonwealth, sessions about core content, motivation of students, assistance for struggling students, help with reading fiction and nonfiction, help with technology's latest apps and free software! Presenters and listeners became collaborative participants in discussions about how middle school students learn and become life-long learners who will thrive in this century.





EDITOR'S APOLOGY

Due to health issues and a family emergency, the November newsletter did not go out. Please accept my very sincere apology. Relevant news from that edition is included in the December issue. During the last part of December, it is hoped the January issue will be finished and distributed at the beginning of the month once contributors have forwarded their news.

No December Calendar Activities
Watch for January to be in your mailbox
January 3, 2014

VMSA NEWSLETTER EDITOR OPENS SPECIAL EMAIL ACCOUNT

To expedite all things pertaining to the VMSA Newsletter in a more timely manner, be advised that Liz Phillips has opened a Gmail account for everyone wishing to correspond, submit an article for publication, forward district news, or make a suggestion for the Question of the Month Contest. By separating newsletter correspondence from all other professional email messages.

editor.vmsa.newsletter@gmail.com

Best Suggestion Contest

After the long Christmas Break, how do you get your students back into the routines and rigor of your course?

The VMSA member with the best solution to this problem will be awarded a \$10 Starbucks card! Nobody has won the last two months, so suggest away! The best solution will appear in the January issue of the VMSA Newsletter.

Submission Deadline is January 1, 2014.

Send your suggestion to Liz Phillips.
editor.vmsa.newsletter@gmail.com

BACK TO SCHOOL PREPARATIONS FOR AFTER YOUR HOLIDAY BREAK

There are plenty of experts out there with helpful suggestions for back-to-work tips for getting back into routines and rigor, but there are not no many tailored to educators and their students. Take a look at these links might share at least one. You might want send information home or forward it electronically to students and their families.

- Back to School Activities After Christmas: http://www.ehow.com/info_7909741_back-school-activities-after-christmas.html
- Ideas for First Day Back from Christmas Vacation: http://www.ehow.com/way_5209014_ideas-back-after-christmas-vacation.html
- How to Cope With Post Holiday Syndrome: <http://www.wikihow.com/Cope-With-Post-Holiday-Syndrome>
- How to Prepare to Return to School After an Extended Break: <http://www.wikihow.com/Prepare-to-Return-to-School-After-an-Extended-Break>
- How to Help Students Settle Back Into School: <http://voices.yahoo.com/after-holidays-help-students-settle-back-764855.html?cat=4>

Do you subscribe to the VDOE e-News that is delivered to teacher mailboxes each week? Do you need the latest and newest resources sent directly to you so you never have to hunt for them? Don't wait!



Subscribe to TeacherDirect!

www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/teacher_direct