

**April, 2018 Local Government Education Week:
Start planning now to partner with our future, students from kindergarten to 12th grade, to
share with them stories of what we are all about!**

Let's celebrate and share the Virginia local government story with students and the greater community in April. Participating communities are eligible to win a great elementary school level book on local government services and further education on the importance of public service at the same time.

In 2012 the General Assembly adopted House Joint Resolution #93 proclaiming the **first week of April as Local Government Education week** in honor of the founding of the Council-Manager form of government in the City of Staunton. The VLGMA Civic Engagement Committee has been developing tools to engage students, our future leaders, in order to acknowledge good community building work, educate on all the services provided at the local level, and to increase student's awareness of career opportunities in local government. This will help us strengthen interest in local government management and public service as a vital part of our democracy, and possibly as a career path.

As we start the New Year, January is the perfect time to start planning for this year's Local Government Education Week, April 1-7. Each year, VLGMA asks each locality's governing body to adopt a proclamation honoring this week as part of this effort. Participation continues to grow each year and we hope that if you haven't taken part in the past that you will join us this year. A template is provided on the Civic Engagement webpage on the VLGMA website <https://icma.org/virginia-local-government-management-association>. You will also receive an email in February from Molly with the template attached as a reminder. To be eligible for the drawing at the summer conference, please send your adopted proclamation to Vivian McGettigan, VLGMA Civic Engagement Committee Chair at Vivian.mcgettigan@yorkcounty.gov

Adopting a proclamation is not enough to really engage in a partnership with the local school district and the young people of our community. We encourage **each locality to develop an engagement plan** that meets your local needs. To aid in this effort the Civic Engagement Committee has pulled together numerous resources that are also posted on the website that include great elementary school level books, a high school teachers' resource guide with lesson plans, and a report of various civic engagement best practices used by VLGMA members. Check out this website link (http://icma.org/en/va/resources/civic_education) for additional great resources.

Activities are not restricted to the first week of April but can occur throughout the year and be highlighted in April. Stay tuned for highlights in upcoming eNews articles. As you start thinking about your engagement plan here are a few examples. You may want to arrange to visit elementary school classrooms to read with the children and discuss how local government works and the practical impacts of local government in their lives. To engage middle school students, you could ask your library director to host a "If I were County Administrator or City Manager" essay contest. The essay winner would have the opportunity to meet with the County

Administrator or City Manager to receive a small gift, tour the County Offices and take pictures with staff. For the older children, organizing a Youth Commission with representatives selected from the high schools is a great opportunity for students to learn more about County services while sharing information to our governing bodies on various topics impacting on our communities' youth.

A few other activities:

- 1- Provide for all school and public libraries to have copies of elementary school level books, such as Out and About City Hall, which is available at: <http://www.capstonepub.com>. This is a great illustrated resource that describes what services a locality provides and is affordable at about \$20 in hard cover (paper back also available);
- 2- Conduct 7th grade website scavenger hunt to learn about public services;
- 3- Develop a high school service learning program;
- 4- Conduct mock Governing Body meetings;
- 5- Share the Teacher's Resource Guide, including sample lesson plans designed for upper middle/high school students, to be used as part of the curriculum for meeting civics/social studies standards of learning; and/or
- 6- Be a guest speaker to middle or high school students regarding your career as a City or Deputy Manager or discuss community projects (e.g. annual budget, redevelopment effort or capital infrastructure improvements) that the students will see occurring or read about in the news.

The Civic Committee wants to share your community stories, so please email Vivian McGettigan Vivian.mcgettigan@yorkcounty.gov with your initiatives.

Thanks!