

**VLGMA Civic Engagement Committee Newsletter Article:
2017 Local Government Education Week- How Did We Do?
April 2017**

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In 2012, the Virginia General Assembly adopted House Joint Resolution #93 proclaiming the first week of April as Local Government Education week in honor of the formation of the Council-Manager form of government in the City of Staunton, Virginia. In honor of Local Government Education Week, the VLGMA promotes tools to engage students - our future leaders - in order to acknowledge good community building work, provide education on local government services at the local level, and to increase student's awareness of career and service opportunities in local government.

As a part of this effort, VLGMA asked each locality's governing body to adopt a proclamation honoring Local Government Education Week and to develop engagement plans to get schools and students involved in their local governments. The Civic Engagement Committee thanks VLGMA, VML, VACo, and the Clerk's Association for spreading the word through emails and magazine articles. I am pleased with the response this year as I have currently received 10 proclamations. I am sure this doesn't represent every government proclamation that was adopted this year as I will continue to receive proclamations for the next few weeks. At the summer conference, three localities will be drawn from the list of those who have submitted proclamations and the winners will receive a copy of *Out and About at City Hall*.

Even more exciting is the breadth of great activities that were undertaken during the first week of April and year round. The Civic Committee wants to share your community stories, so please email me with your initiatives. Stay tuned for highlights in upcoming eNews articles. To share an example: this year, York County embraced Local Government Education Week by planning new activities for elementary and middle school students. The children of Dare Elementary School enthusiastically welcomed County Administrator Neil Morgan who took time out of his busy schedule to read "Out and About at City Hall" with the children and discuss how local government works and the practical impacts of local government in their lives. To engage middle school students, Kevin Smith, York County's Library Director, introduced a "If I were County Administrator" essay contest. The essay winner was recognized in anticipation of Local Government Education Week and received a \$50 Amazon gift card.

As a reminder, here are some ideas to further develop your year round program:

1. Place in school and public libraries the elementary-level book, "Out and About City Hall," available at: <http://www.capstonepub.com> for \$20 (hard cover). This illustrated book is a great resource that describes the services provided by a locality (paper back also available)
2. Conduct guest readings of the books to elementary classes
3. Participate in VML's "If I were Mayor/County Administrator" essay contest
4. Conduct 7th grade website scavenger hunt to learn about public services
5. Develop a high school service learning program
6. Conduct mock Governing Body meetings
7. 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
8. Be a guest speaker to middle or high school students regarding your career as a County/City or Deputy Manager and/or discuss community projects (e.g., annual budget, redevelopment effort or capital infrastructure improvements) that the students will see occurring or read in the news.

Check out this website link www.icma.org/vlgma for additional great resources and feel free to contact us with questions or to share additional ideas.

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