

Virginia PTA

Child Advocates of the Year

2023-2024



Abigail Spanberger

US House of Representatives

Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger represents Virginia's 7th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Rep. Spanberger carried legislation to improve student health and safety including bills to target online sales of fentanyl and increase access to healthy school meals. Additionally, she introduced legislation to expand access to broadband and telemental health services in rural school communities. Her consistent support for funding essential education services positively impacts student academic success, health, and well-being.



Anne Holton

Virginia Board of Education

Ms. Holton has consistently fought to raise the staffing Standards of Quality for Virginia's schools, lift the cap on funding support staff, and implement other policies that directly enhance student academic achievement, student health, and building safety. Throughout her years serving as First Lady of Virginia, a Former Virginia Secretary of Education, and now, as a member of the Virginia Board of Education, Ms. Holton has always focused on family outreach and increasing opportunities for Virginia's children.



Alexandria City Council of PTA/PTSA's

Council PTA, Child Advocate of the Year (Northern Region)

Alexandria City Council PTA's advocacy outreach this year included robust parent educational resources that shared how the school board budget was developed and provided regular school board meeting updates. They also developed a coordinated campaign that included yard signs to increase awareness and advocate for local school funding. Additionally, Alexandria City Council PTA hosted candidate forums and other community outreach activities that positioned the Council PTA as a valued community and parent resource.



Grandin Court Elementary School PTA

Local PTA, Child Advocate of the Year (Blue Ridge Region, Roanoke City Council of PTA's/PTSA's)

Grandin Court Elementary School has been working hard to increase parent notifications when a threat to student and school safety occurs. To bring change, they formed a committee to research school division policies, and state and federal legislation. Through the development of a Resolution, they shared proposed policy changes and a request for increased security resources with their School Board, which improved threat assessment awareness.



Ashley Soukup * Cool Spring Elementary PTA

Individual Child Advocate of the Year (Central Region, Hanover Council of PTA's/PTSA's)

Ashley Soukup is bringing change, leadership and advocacy to her community. When the overcrowding at her school was not being addressed, she sprang into action with parents and teachers. She spent countless hours researching, holding meetings, presenting, developing ideas for solutions, attending School Board and Board of Supervisor meetings, and keeping her school community informed and united. With Ashley's guidance, families were empowered to share personal stories and articulate the importance of adequate facilities for their children's education.