

EVERY CHILD * YOUR VOICE!

CHILD ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR

INDIVIDUALS * ELECTED OFFICIALS * LOCAL UNITS * COUNCILS * DISTRICTS

Honoring impactful work advocating for the education, health,
and well-being of students and communities

2022

Senator Jennifer McClellan

Legislative Child Advocate of the Year

Senator Jennifer McClellan serves in the Virginia Senate representing the 9th District. Senator McClellan is a busy mom of two elementary aged children, and has served as a legislator in the General Assembly for the past 15 years. Senator McClellan is being honored for her relentless effort to improve Virginia's Standards of Quality to reflect actual school staffing practices and best practices recommended by the Virginia Board of Education. Over the past 2 years this has resulted in the establishment of a new standard for specialized student support positions – such as school social workers, school psychologists and school nurses. Additionally, Senator McClellan is being honored for her work advocating for and leading the Commission on School Construction and Modernization which has resulted in historic funding and targeted legislation to address Virginia's long overlooked school construction, renovation and maintenance needs.

Delegate Carrie Coyner

Legislative Child Advocate of the Year

Delegate Carrie Coyner serves in the Virginia House of Delegates representing the 62nd District and the citizens of Chesterfield, Prince George and Hopewell. Delegate Coyner is a busy mom of three children, ages 13, 14 and 15, and has previously served as a member of the Elizabeth Scott Elementary PTA and the Chesterfield County School Board. Delegate Coyner is being honored for her work on the Virginia Literacy Act, which requires school divisions to implement a comprehensive approach to literacy that uses scientifically based reading research across all aspects of teaching reading, from training and developing teachers, to teaching students in the classroom and partnering with parents to support reading at home.

Alicia Atkins, Henrico County Public Schools

School Board Child Advocate of the Year

Alicia Atkins is being honored for inspiring parents, educators, and community members to take action for all children. Ms. Atkins has passionately worked to increase family engagement through PTAs by helping to start, rebuild and recharge several local units. She frequently speaks to the power of parent engagement in student outcomes, inviting Henrico County Council PTA to participate in her Town Hall meetings and volunteering her time to attend PTA meetings, and events. Ms. Atkins empowers parents through education and identifying and creating opportunities to provide input to HCPS. Her accessibility actively fosters a welcoming environment that makes advocacy feel like a casual conversation and inspires parents to live the PTA mission.