



## Social Work Month

March is Social Work Awareness Month and we would like to take this opportunity to educate people about our unique job. Augusta County SSWs/VTs are required to have a Masters in Social Work or Education and hold a Pupil Personnel Services License. These professionals are trained to address the socio-emotional needs of students and their families in order to help them achieve success and stability. Our district has a total of five SSWs/VTs serving 20 schools. Social justice, service, dignity and worth of a person, the importance of human relationships, competence and integrity are the guiding tenets of the profession and serve as the foundation when working with students/families

in need. Social workers are oriented by the “person in the environment” perspective and view the student as part of a variety of “systems” which include the school, home, community, church, and friends etc. Focused on the student’s and family’s strengths, SSW/VTs examine all the systems and how they impact the individual. An often under-utilized resource, school social workers are a valuable asset and can help further the purpose of schools; to provide a safe and positive setting for learning, growth and development. School Social Workers serve as a link between the home, school and community and work hard to empower families.

### Meet Your School Social Worker/Visiting Teacher

**Ashley Whitesel, MSW**

Buffalo Gap Vertical Team

**Brandi Heiston, MSW,**

Wilson Vertical Team

**Jessica Hawkins, MSW**

Fort Defiance Vertical Team

**Patricia Coogan, M. Ed,**

Stuarts Draft Vertical Team

**Sarah Machold, MSW, LSW,**

Riverheads Vertical Team

For more information:

Please call 540-245-5133

or visit

[http://](http://www.augusta.k12.va.us/)

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## The Role Of A School Social Worker

- Promote and reinforce regular attendance with students and families at the Elementary and Middle School levels
- Assess families experiencing homelessness and provide McKinney Vento services to those that qualify
- Provide supportive counseling services to students, groups of students and families when at-risk for school difficulties
- Conduct home visits
- Participate in Problem Solving & TAT meetings to discuss curriculum supports for students
- Complete socio-cultural assessments for special education eligibility
- Connect families to local agencies
- Talk to school personnel to sensitize them to student-family-school-community relations
- Advocate for the best interest of the student and family

## Where We Spend Our Time

