# Superintendent’s Memo #197-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: August 16, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Rule of Law Project

I am pleased to announce that The Virginia Law Foundation (VLF) and The Center for Teaching the Rule of Law will sponsor the annual VLF Rule of Law Project (the Project) during the 2019-2020 academic year. Begun in 2009, the Project is an educational program taught by volunteer lawyers and judges in Virginia and is specifically designed to enhance teaching the rule of law to middle school civics students in public schools throughout the state. Schools in over 100 of Virginia’s school divisions have already used this free, one-day educational program to help inform middle school students about the rule of law as the foundation for our judicial system, representative form of government, and civil society.

The Project’s curriculum is [web-based](http://www.thecenterforruleoflaw.org/), and its educational materials have been developed by educators, administrators, parents, judges, and lawyers in collaboration with local school officials. All materials are aligned to the *Virginia Standards of Learning for Civics and Economics*, and include, but are not limited to:

* Three high resolution films: (1) (["The Law Rules"](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEFB8WBIw5A)), featuring prominent lawyers and judges talking about the history and meaning of the rule of law and (2) “The Virginia Law Foundation/Virginia Bar Association, Rule of Law in Action,” two videos containing footage of live classroom discussions and other presentations (accessible on our website homepage);
* Planning and implementation guidelines; and
* Pre-visitation instructional ideas for teachers, visitation day writing/discussion prompts, interdisciplinary lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, legal case studies, and mock trials and hearings.

The Project is funded by a generous grant from The Virginia Law Foundation. If you have administrative questions regarding implementation of the Project, please contact Bryan Horn (Regions 1, 2, 3, and 8) at bhorn@fgb.com or John Koehler (Regions 4, 5, 6, and 7) at jkoehler@thecenterforruleoflaw.org. Education questions regarding the content of the Project should be directed to H. Timothy (Tim) Isaacs by email at tisaacs@thecenterforruleoflaw.org or by telephone at (540) 375-5776. Additional information is available from Christonya Brown, History & Social Science Education Coordinator by email at christonya.brown@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone (804) 225-2893.

JFL/CB/jad