# Superintendent’s Memo #310-20

  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: November 20, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

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

## SUBJECT: EdEquityVA Week: November 30 – December 4, 2020

I am pleased to announce that Governor Ralph S. Northam has [proclaimed](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/proclamations/proclamation/edequityva-week.html) November 30-December 4, 2020 as EdEquityVA Week in the Commonwealth. EdEquityVA Week is an opportunity to recognize the efforts of Virginia educators to advance equity outcomes for all Virginia students. Throughout the week, the Department will be recognizing the work of school leaders, education stakeholders, advocates, policy makers, and teachers who have demonstrated courageous equity leadership in the Commonwealth. In recognition of EdEquityVA Week, the Department is hosting the following events:

**EdEquityVA Week Virtual Symposiums (December 1 & 2, 2020):**

* December 1, 2020 (1:30-3:30 PM): Culturally Relevant Pedagogy featuring a **Keynote Address by Dr. Gloria Ladson Billings**, pioneer of the term culturally relevant pedagogy, esteemed pedagogical scholar, and author of *Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*.
* December 2, 2020 (1:30-3:30 PM): Closing Opportunity Gaps featuring a **Keynote Address by Dr. John King**, 10th U.S. Secretary Education under President Obama and current President and CEO of the Education Trust.

Join Governor Northam (invited), Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni, State Superintendent Dr. James Lane, and Chief Equity and Diversity Officer Dr. Janice Underwood for these important statewide conversations. The EdEquityVA Week Symposiums are free and open to all Virginia educators, however advanced registration is required. Please register online here: [EdEquityVA Week Symposium Registration](https://forms.gle/8JHoHs2HpAcS796r5). Registration will close at 12 noon on Monday, November 30, 2020.

**Celebration of the 2020 Recipients of the Mary Peake Award for Excellence in Education Equity (December 3, 2020):**

* December 3, 2020 (1:30-2:30PM Tentative): Join Governor Northam (invited), First Lady of Virginia Mrs. Pamela Northam, Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni, and State Superintendent Dr. James Lane, as we announce and celebrate the educators, policy makers, school leaders, and stakeholder organizations whose service and leadership are impacting equity outcomes for Virginia students. The [Mary Peake Award for Excellence in Education Equity](https://www.virginiaisforlearners.virginia.gov/mary-peake-award/) honors individuals and organizations that have demonstrated a commitment to working to reduce inequity or remedy the effects of inequity in Virginia’s public schools. This celebration will be virtual and live streamed on the VDOE’s YouTube Channel here: [VDOE YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrbxl9wHScrWKWIEoUWNIfQ/videos). You may register in advance for this event here: [Mary Peake Award Recognition Registration](https://doe-virginia-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_x5m3dv2oQNGzD7VO30yd2A).

I encourage you to join me November 30th - December 4th, in acknowledging the incredible equity advancements taking place in schools and divisions across the Commonwealth. You can also join with us on Social Media by recognizing courageous equity leaders in your community using **#EdEquityVAWeek**.

The Virginia Department of Education is committed to ensuring that our system of public education is one where we can no longer predict student outcomes based on race, gender, zip code, ability, socio-economic status and/or languages spoken at home. Our recently released [Navigating EdEquityVA Roadmap](https://www.virginiaisforlearners.virginia.gov/edequityva/) prioritizes the following two strategies: (1) Increasing the Cultural Proficiency of Virginia's Educator Workforce, and (2) Closing Opportunity Gaps for Virginia students. I hope that you will join the VDOE in recognizing EdEquityVA Week and take a moment to celebrate and support Virginia’s commitment to education equity, as well as recognize the vital role of equity champions in schools and divisions throughout the Commonwealth.

Please direct all inquiries pertaining to EdEquityVA Week 2020, to Leah Dozier Walker, Director, Office of Equity and Community Engagement at: [EdEquityVA@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:EdEquityVA@doe.virginia.gov).

JFL/LDW