



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: August 17, 2018

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: 2019 Commemoration Schools

The 400th anniversary of the first representative legislative assembly in the New World will be marked in 2019. This was the arrival of the first recorded Africans to English North America, the recruitment of English women in significant numbers, the first official English Thanksgiving in North America, and the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of the Virginia Colony.

The Commonwealth of Virginia and the 2019 Commemoration, [AMERICAN EVOLUTION™](#), invite every school community in the Commonwealth to engage with the themes of the 2019 Commemoration—democracy, diversity, and opportunity—through the 2019 Commemoration Schools campaign. Schools can choose from innovative project ideas included in the 2019 Commemoration Schools online toolkit or create custom projects and activities. Participation is open to every public or private school or home-school community in the Commonwealth (PreK-12).

The [2019 Commemoration Schools](#) program is a yearlong initiative for school communities in Virginia to demonstrate 2019 spirit through participation in contests, projects, and activities that are sponsored by the 2019 Commemoration and partners.

Participating schools will:

- Increase students' understanding of Virginia's past, present, and future.
- Create a legacy by joining educators and students from around the Commonwealth to mark the importance of 2019.
- Receive official recognition from the Commonwealth, including a letter of thanks from the Governor of Virginia.
- Use of an exclusive banner to show your 2019 Spirit all year long.
- Receive a free 2019 Schools project box with engaging materials for students and staff when registered for the 2019 Commemoration Schools program.

2019 Commemoration Schools will launch on September 17, 2018, Constitution Day, and close with a 2019 Schools Spirit Week in April 2019 that will feature digital programming available exclusively for participating learning communities.

For more information, please contact Betsy Barton, Specialist for History and Social Science, Office of Humanities and Early Childhood, by email at Betsy.Barton@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3454.

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