



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DATE: February 16, 2023

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Governor Youngkin's Proclamation for Black History Month in Virginia and a Special Event for students in 4th Grade and Up

Each February our nation renews a commitment to consider the impact and legacy that Black Americans have had through their leadership in our country. Governor Youngkin proclaimed February 2023 as Black History Month in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Noted in the [Proclamation](#), "Black Virginians continue to shape the economic, cultural, political, and landscapes of Virginia and the country."

In celebration of Black History Month, Governor Youngkin, along with the education staff at Fort Monroe, will host a special **live-streamed** learning event for Virginia students in grades 4 and higher.

WHO: Virginia students in 4th grade and up

DATE: February 21, 2023

TIME: 11:15-12:30

LINK: [Fort Monroe, What Is Freedom](#)

The Commonwealth of Virginia at Fort Monroe was the site where the first Africans were brought in shackles to the Americas as slaves. Later, Fort Monroe served as the first legal safe haven for freedom seekers before the Emancipation Proclamation. The live-streamed learning experience on February 21 will focus on the arrival of the first Africans to Old Point Comfort and connect it to the contraband decision during the Civil War.

There is no need for schools or teachers to pre-register for the live event.

The Virginia Department of Education values the efforts of teachers in promoting high-quality Black History education during February and throughout the year.

For additional information about the event, please contact Christonya Brown, history and social science coordinator, at Christonya.Brown@doe.virginia.gov.

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