



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

February 6, 2015

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: *Selma* Speech and Essay Contest – Deadline Extended to February 15, 2015

The *Selma* Speech and Essay Contest was inspired by the release of the dramatic film *Selma*. The purpose of the contest is to engage high school students in thinking, writing, and speaking about relevant, current issues of individual freedom and self-determination in our country today. As 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the *Selma* march and signing into law of the Voting Rights Act, the *Selma* Speech and Essay contest aims to inspire students to think about and appreciate their Constitutional rights, our freedoms, and how contributing to our democracy is the responsibility of all United States citizens.

The *Selma* Speech and Essay contest is open to high school students ages 14-18, as of the February 15 deadline, who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school, or home study program in the United States and its territories.

For more information about the contest topic, rules, and prizes, visit the [Selma Speech and Essay contest](#). If you have additional questions, please contact Selma@libertymuseum.org.

SRS/CB/vdg