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Public Demonstration, Legislative Honors to Highlight VEA Convention

Event will kick off Thursday evening, March 28, at the Richmond Convention Center

Virginia Education Association members will take to the streets Friday during the Union's three-day convention this week at the Greater Richmond Convention Center.

Some 600 elected delegates, who are teachers and school support professionals from across the Commonwealth, will also consider a range of important public education issues and chart the organization's course for the year ahead during the convention. The event begins Thursday evening, March 28, at the Richmond Convention Center and runs through Saturday, March 30.

On Friday, VEA President Jim Livingston will release new data showing that the gap between Virginia teacher salaries and the national average is growing. The pay gap already exceeds \$9,200, and Virginia teacher pay since the Recession, adjusted for inflation, has *declined* 8.5 percent.

As part of VEA's ongoing "Fund Our Future" campaign, convention delegates, wearing Red4Ed attire and accompanied by a red school bus, will march around RCC Friday afternoon.

"Despite very recent state efforts to raise teacher pay, Virginia has not caught up," says Livingston. "We will be marching to draw attention to the fact that we risk losing talented teachers to states that pay more, and we're going to find it even harder to attract great teacher candidates to Virginia."

During Friday morning's session, VEA will honor elected officials, highlighted by the awarding of Legislators of the Year to The Virginia Legislative Black Caucus. Delegate Lamont Bagby, Caucus Chair, will be on hand to accept the award. VEA will also give several Legislative Champion Awards to the officials listed below.

"Our delegates will discuss and work through some of the most pressing challenges facing public education in Virginia," said Livingston, a middle school math teacher from Prince William County. "It's also an excellent time for us to push forward in our efforts to get better school funding and to honor legislators who led the charge for more equitable school funding."

The convention also features an awards banquet Friday evening, at which VEA will honor deserving supporters of public education in Virginia, both individuals and organizations. A list of honorees will be available to media members in a separate release that day.

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Media members interested in covering the Delegate Assembly should call Tom Allen in VEA Communications at 804-274-9569. Please bring appropriate credentials to the Convention Center.

VEA on Twitter: @VEA4Kids

2019 Legislative Champions

-) Delegate Hala Ayala
-) Delegate Jennifer Carroll-Foy
-) Senator Mark Peake
-) Delegate Debra Rodman
-) Delegate Bob Thomas
-) Delegate Cheryl Turpin
-) Delegate Lee Ware